

INSIDE SOCCER

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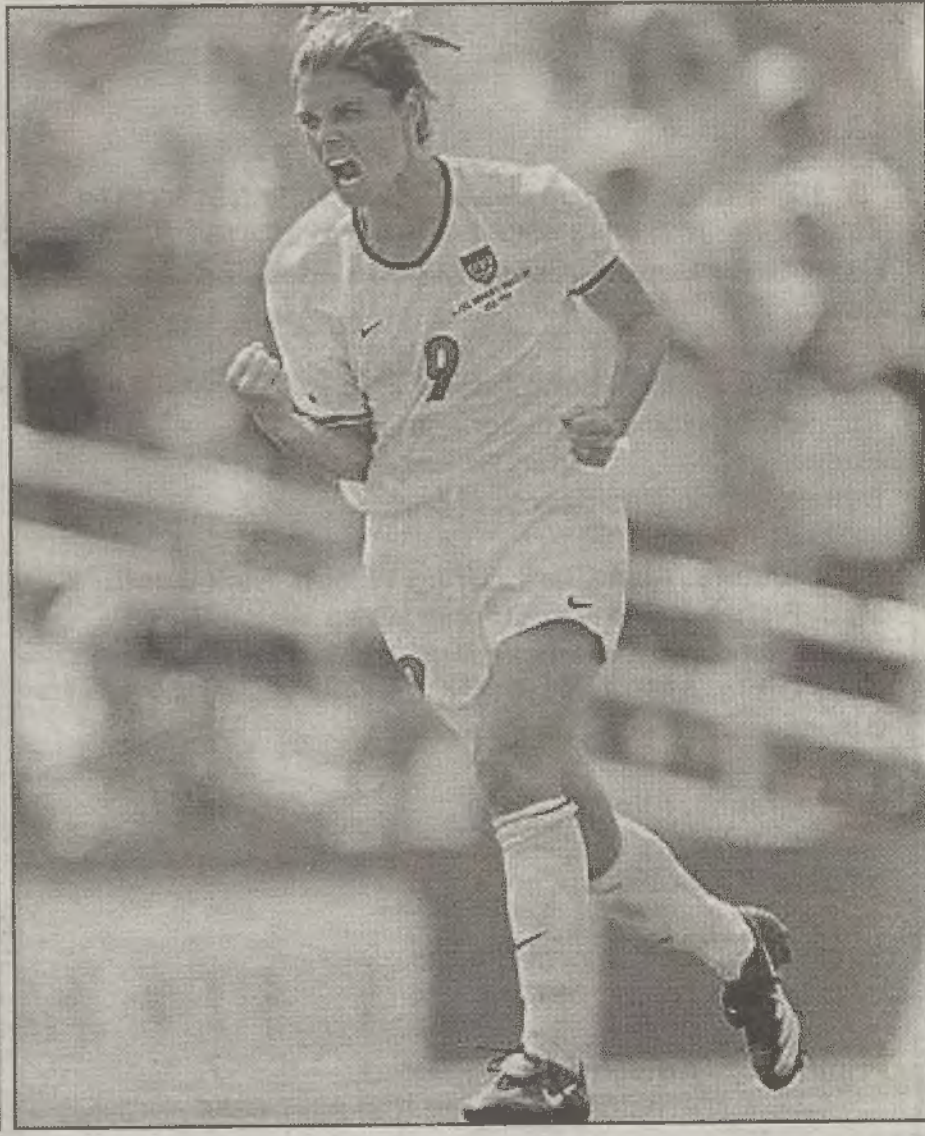
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GRAND FINALS AND
UK PREMIER LEAGUE
PREVIEW**



IT'S MIA V MURRAY!



Fantastic news for Australian soccer fans with the announcement that the greatest woman footballer in the world is on her way to Australia. Mia Hamm, of world champions the USA, will be here in December to play in the four-nation Australia Cup tournament.

Australia's Matildas will play the USA together with powerhouse Norway plus the Czech Republic between December 3 and 12. The venues are to be announced shortly.

It will be fascinating to see two of the greats of the modern game, Mia Hamm

(above right) and our own Julie Murray (above), head-to-head in a goal-scoring showdown.

Another American star to look out for is Brandi Chastain, who scored the winning penalty in the World Cup final and promptly took her top off in sheer jubilation!

Held in the US in June and July, the World Cup broke all records for media coverage and attendances, and stunned the sporting fraternity worldwide with its skill and the sheer enjoyment exhibited by the players.

The World Cup final, between America and China, pulled over 90,000

fans with a massive worldwide TV audience on top of that. The Americans, with their high media profile are now termed 'the world's most recognizable team'.

Australian Women's Soccer Association Chief Executive, Warren Fisher, said he was looking forward to this tour, with the prospect of large attendances putting women's football in the forefront of media here.

He added: 'The domestic program will step up to a new level with the Australia Cup, both in a technical sense and in terms of pre-Olympic marketing opportunities.'

'Local fans will see the Matildas play

each of the 2000 Olympic qualified nations in the coming year. We thought it would be nice to kick things off with the two most successful nations on earth.'

It is anticipated that our Matildas will have as many as 14 home internationals in the lead-up to the Olympics.

Shortly before Mia Hamm and the Americans arrives Australian fans will also see the Brazilian men's side for a brief tour, and with an expanded Ericsson Cup, these are great times to be football fans here in Australia.

See our interview with star Matilda Joanne Peters on page six.

EDITORIAL

If we are to believe what we are hearing, this weekend could see the long-awaited announcement on the Socceroo coaching position.

If it is to happen, it comes not a moment too soon. The uncertainty has not helped players, the candidates in line or their clubs. Why? Because plans on a personal and club level are being put on hold till a decision is made. So the sooner the better for all concerned. As Socceroo Aurelio Vidmar said last week to Inside Soccer, it affects all concerned when we don't know what is going to happen.

Who will it be? That's the \$200,000 a year question. There are three serious candidates: Frank Farina, Eddie Krncevic

and David Mitchell. All have impeccable credentials. That is, raised here, playing careers in Australia and in the European leagues and Socceroo representation at all levels.

Plus each has had coaching successes since they have returned to their home country. All three are liked and respected. Any one would do us proud.

The selection of this 'new guard' of coaching sends the right signal through the ranks of players and coaches in Australia. That is, as an Australian, coaching dreams can come true at the highest level.

With the employment of such coaches, it may finally put to rest the notion of spending millions on overseas coaches, the ultimate in a cultural cringe. We have grown up enough to be able to stand on our own two feet.

Symbolically, to go with one of these new and exciting coaches has got to be good for our game, our psyche as under-achievers and Soccer Australia's finances.

Each possesses his own unique talents. Farina as a no-nonsense straight talker, Mitchell with his inspirational personality and Krncevic with his knowledge and connections worldwide. We still believe however that Farina is in pole

position to be given the job.

Mitchell however is in a delicate position given his commitment to Power, and the lure of players based on 'the Mitchell factor'.

Are there other candidates? Bernd Stange would make an excellent coach. He has something the others don't have: coaching experience at the highest international level with East Germany. He has however, committed himself to winning a grand final with Glory, and if he does, he will be doing a great service to Australian soccer.

Ange Postecoglou has done a remarkable job in winning two back-to-back championships. One feels his time will come. Perhaps a job in the national coaching structure? Plus he will learn even more by coaching South Melbourne in the inaugural World Club Championships. He is one to look for in the future.

The so-called 'old guard's' choice is Raul Blanco. He would dearly love the job but his CV lacks success. For example, Confederations Cup. When it really mattered Blanco failed to get us through to this lucrative competition against modest opposition in the Oceania qualifiers. He blew his opportunity, merely underscoring the notion that nice guys don't have that killer instinct.

And this is his problem. He is not, as Frank Arok said recently, a winner. He did-

n't win anything with West Adelaide and he has had plenty of time to prove himself. A nice guy but this selection is too important to be impeded by sentimentality. This is a vital decision: we need a proven winner.

Another problem with coaches like Blanco and Scheinflug is respect. There is a strong rumour that the Euro block of Socceroos simply do not respect them. And it's easy to understand when you look at the quality of coaching they receive overseas.

The likes of Farina et al have respect. As a kid Harry Kewell would have looked up to the likes of Krncevic and Mitchell for what they had done and who they played for. Without respect a coach is doomed. See Graham Arnold's comments on page seven.

Of course decisions like these do not occur in a vacuum. There are many differing contexts to consider. Not least of which is the political context. Decisions like this highlight a myriad of political affiliations and alliances.

Those in the media and administration of our game need to think carefully about the future of our game and our personnel. This is no time to think selfishly by supporting the old guard.

We have to go with the next generation. They deserve it and it will be a positive step.

INSIDE SOCCER'S SELECTIONS

Socceroo coach: Frank Farina
Assistant: Eddie Krncevic

Olyroo coach: Frank Farina
Assistant: Eddie Krncevic
Young Socceroo coach: David Mitchell
Assistant: Ange Postecoglou
Joeys coach: Kelly Cross
Assistant: Ernie Merrick

Others to be given experience:
Lee Sterrey, Alan Davidson, Graham Arnold, Jim Patikas, David Ratcliffe.

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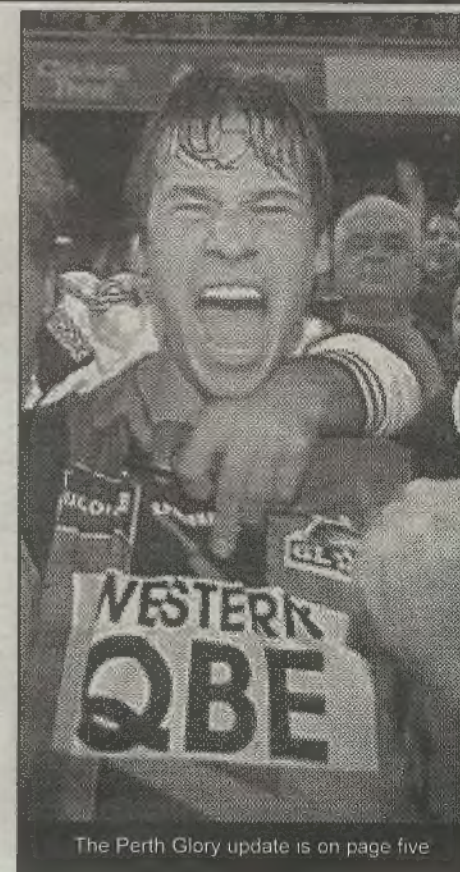
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FALCONS PUSH FOR MERGED SUPER-CLUB

Some major changes are in the air down Gippsland way. The idea is to combine all of Gippsland's sporting sides and house them in one super-complex.

Called 'Team Gippsland' the community sport and entertainment complex, the project is being officially announced tomorrow in Gippsland.

Based on the freehold land of 35 acres owned by Gippsland Falcons, the idea is to combine Gippsland's sporting fraternities together to form one powerful organisation called Team Gippsland, which itself will have its various sporting off-shoots on the same piece of real estate playing on their separate sporting grounds.

It is proposed that on top of Gippsland Falcons playing soccer, there will be the basketball side Gippsland Pacers and the local rules side Gippsland Power, plus sports such as Netball, Golf,



Falcons soccer manager Fred di Sipio is congratulated by Premier Kennett on the club's re-admittance to the NSL. With him is Victorian Sports Minister Pat MacNamara.

Hockey and Indoor Tennis.

It is also proposed to use the facility to stage outdoor concerts with a seating capacity of up to 10,000 seating being planned.

According to the Falcons, the development will take several years to implement but work has already started. All sports involved are reputedly 100% behind the venture and preliminary discussions have already started.

The new board of directors, announced yesterday, have stressed financial viability as their primary concern.

FALCONS APPOINT WELSH INTERNATIONAL AS COACH

Welsh International defender Jeff Hopkins has taken over as coach of regional Ericsson Cup side Gippsland Falcons. He fills the position made vacant by Stuart Munro who left recently to join Carlton.

The no-nonsense defender was announced as coach yesterday. Hopkins joined Falcons last year after a long career as a professional in the UK. He has also played for Wales.

It is expected that he will be player/coach, providing vital experience from the back to what is a young side.

Last season Hopkins was one of the few players to shine in a side that struggled after winning the pre-season cup in Victoria.

Others in the frame for the position were Mike Peterson and Jim Prygolos.

Hopkins' appointment has been welcomed by Gippsland's soccer fraternity who see Hopkins as a coach who can pass on to his young side the experience needed to succeed in an increasingly professional NSL.

And together with the announcement of the Team Gippsland Project, there is

considerable optimism for the future of soccer in Gippsland.



New Falcons coach Jeff Hopkins

POWERHOUSE HOME FOR PARRAMATTA



Soon to be seen at the 'Powerhouse'. Parra's Jacob Burns.

New Ericsson Cup club Parramatta Power staged their first official training session yesterday at their home ground Parramatta stadium.

A large media contingent turned up to see them go through their paces.

Presently they have signed up a 14-man full-time squad but this is expected to be added to in the coming weeks.

The Parramatta stadium will now be known as the 'Powerhouse' for their home games, which is similar to Northern Spirit's North Sydney Oval being renamed 'Spirit Park'.

Off the park and the Power's soccer office will be set up within close proximity of their home ground.

At the moment it is located within the offices of the Parramatta Eels Rugby League set-up. The staff say they are excited at the prospect of the new club and hope it will be as successful as Northern Spirit.

And the club's temporary logo (pictured) has been replaced and will be unveiled soon. The club organised a public competition to find the best design.

Power has also been out in the community promoting the new team, with approximately 35,000 juniors in Sydney's west being contacted.

Parramatta Power's first game of the season will be at the Powerhouse against Marconi.

The present full-time first team

squad is:

Walter Ardone, David Barrett, Steve Berry, Milan Blagojevic, Jacob Burns, Steve Eagleton, Mike Gibson, Joel Griffiths, Stephen Laybutt, Richard Plesa, Michael Santalab, Mile Sterjovski, Danny Townsend, Joe Vrikkic.

Coach: David Mitchell, Assistant Laurie McKinna.

Former Socceroo striker Zlatko Arambasic has been recruited by Sydney Olympic for the coming national league season, reports AAP.

Arambasic left Olympic six years ago to play in Europe and has had successful stints in Belgium, Holland and France.

He played with NAC Breda in the Dutch premier league from 1996-98 before playing 13 matches last season with the second division club Mechelen where he scored 11 goals.

The signing will also re-unite Arambasic with former Socceroo coach Frank Arok, who first introduced the striker into the national team as a 20-year-old for the match against Moscow Torpedos in 1990.

Arambasic will team with last season's top goal scorer Pablo Cardozo to form a strong front line duo. They last paired together with Olympic during the 1992 season.

"But we haven't finished our recruitment drive yet. We're still looking for another striker and a defender," Olympic general manager Frank Martin said.

"We're currently talking to an Australian-based player who has just returned from overseas for a front line position.

"Most of the squad has been completed for the season. We've lost Elias Augerinos and Jason Culina, while Ante Juric is trialling overseas in Croatia."

Martin said Olympic will have a strong preparation for the expanded new season which will include recently admitted clubs Parramatta Power and Auckland Kings.

Olympic have combined with Wollongong to travel to Fiji next month where they will contest a round robin tournament against the Fijian national and Olympic teams.

"We'll be playing at least three games and maybe a final with 18 players forming the travel squad," Martin said.

"The club began full training this week and the Fijian tournament will be of great benefit to them."



FRIDAY NIGHT'S A GREAT NIGHT FOR (REAL) FOOTBALL

Adelaide Sharks are to follow a growing trend and play home matches next season on Friday nights.

Eight clubs now have set Fridays as match nights, including Adelaide City, which sees the move as a critical factor in its ambitious marketing strategy.

The Sharks' willingness to follow is partly for reasons of consistency. Both clubs have for several seasons played on Sundays.

Spokesman Zis Ginos said the club would advise Soccer Australia it intended to play most home matches on Friday nights.

"There may be some Sunday matches, but Friday night football has a lot of appeal," Ginos said.

The Sharks and City recognised the success Northern Spirit achieved last season with Friday night scheduling. Spirit's astute marketing produced a 15,000 attendance average.

Other clubs to play on Fridays are Newcastle, Canberra, Carlton, Spirit and incoming Parramatta Power and Auckland Kings.

Marconi and Brisbane will continue to play on Saturday nights, while Perth Glory, Sydney United, Sydney Olympic, Melbourne Knights and South Melbourne have targeted Sundays as match days.

Adelaide will not host a match in the opening round of the season in October, if Soccer Australia sticks with the draft NSL draw released to clubs. City is away to Wollongong and the Sharks have a bye.

In the second round, City has another away game to Newcastle, while the Sharks host Sydney Olympic. City's first home match is in round three against Northern Spirit on October 15. The Sharks play on the same night, away to Canberra.

The official draw is expected to be released next month. The season kicks off on October 3.

Leeds are keen on Glory man Danny Hay, but the perpetual problem of work permits could scupper the whole deal.



Friday night fans at Spirit... a few drinks at the end of the working week and football. What could be better?

Glory general manager Roger Lefort said Leeds was very keen on the 24-year-old, who recently played several games in a two-week trial, which included a trip to Sweden.

"We're very close to doing a deal with Leeds," Lefort said.

"They've made an offer and we're still negotiating."

"But anything that is agreed will be subject to a visa being granted."

Hay could have been a Crewe Alexander player had it not been for a work visa problem last year.

The British Government recently tightened its restrictions on non-European Union nationals playing soccer in the UK.

Players from outside the EU must have played in 75 per cent of their national team's games in the two years. Each country is also rated, using FIFA rankings.

There is an appeals system to assist highly-talented players from lowly-ranked countries.

German club VfB Stuttgart is said to also be keen on the big fella.

Lefort said the Glory's fee may not be as big as some expect because of a 10 per cent levy by Soccer Australia on overseas transfers. The players' union also receives a cut, as does the player.

Hay, meanwhile, has returned to Perth. "Danny's still under contract and will train with us until his future is settled," Lefort said to local media.

Coach Bernd Stange returned from holidays and the players will start pre-season training this week.

The squad should be strengthened soon.

AROUND THE TRAPS

Brisbane Strikers' Matt Bell and Angelo Costanzo of Adelaide City both played in a trial match for a Hibs XI against non-league opposition, Vale of Leithen. They have probably also featured in other '2nd XI' trial games, of which there have been a few.

First team boss, Alex McLeish, was on hand to witness the 6-2 victory against Vale, and it has been reported by more than one eyewitness that Costanzo impressed greatly.

Adelaide City has confirmed it has signed former Sharks striker Danny Vidakovic to a two-year contract.

Teenager Vidakovic, who showed early-season promise until fitness problems set in, met his new team-mates at City's first training session on Friday.

Assistant coach Joe Mullen took the session with Zoran Matic stranded in Europe. Matic was due home but has had difficulty with a connecting flight from Europe. He



Matt Bell... trialling in Scotland with Angelo Costanzo (the player not the team!)

should have arrived last night.

And another former Adelaide player Stan Lazaridis is now a Birmingham City man. Him coming home to play Man Utd now makes sense. It was obviously a done deal.

Northern Spirit's David Seal arrived from the UK last Friday. And it's a happy birthday to Spirit striker Tony Perinich for last week. Love the pick-up truck Tone!

Spirit games coming up include: Spirit v Kurling District SA on Friday, 27th August at Spirit Park (or St Ives Showground if unavailable). Kick-Off 7.30pm...Friday, 3rd September v Manly Combined Association (details to be finalised)...Spirit v Gladesville-Hornsby SA (details to be finalised).

The Joeys' German tour was cancelled so they are currently touring the East Coast of Australia before heading for Canberra and their first leg U/17 World Cup qualifier against Bahrain on August 14, 7pm at the Bruce. Nice and chilly for the Bahrain lads!

Rumour of the week. At this Friday night's Super League



True Blue... Stan Lazaridis was one of the few overseas Aussies to play against Man Utd. Hmmm.

awards night, a special guest speaker from the UK will appear and make some interesting comments?

You didn't hear that from us, but we will be there to cover it for you, so read next week.

Soccer Australia has short-listed Zoran Matic as a contender for the Socceroos' coaching position.

But the Adelaide City boss is likely to reject an invitation to discuss his interest in the role.

He refuses to be drawn into another guessing game for soccer's top job after being controversially overlooked in 1997. Then chairman David Hill appointed former England coach Terry Venables.

Matic feels Soccer Australia should discard the interview process and instead target the man it wants.

Whichever combination Soccer Australia decides on, it would appear the 29-year reign of Les Scheinflug is near its end.

Scheinflug, who joined the national coaching staff in 1970, has come under heavy criticism for the decline of the under-20 and under-17 teams.

And Carlton's sneaky P.R. people had Inside Soccer well excited this week when they sent out an E-mail claiming the country's wealthiest man had finally seen the light and got on board with the real footie.

Alas not for the moment, but the Blues have signed Andrew Packer. The former Brisbane Striker and Taringa Rovers player was spotted by Munro on his recent scouting trip to Queensland.

Stuart commented on the signing: "Andrew is one of the most exciting young prospects in Australia at the moment. I had heard about him and went to see him play in Queensland. I was immediately impressed with his pace and aggression. He will be a terrific player for Carlton."

Packer (no relation) was due to take the field in last Sunday's pre-season match against the Geelong Allstars.

HAVE YOUR SAY...

The NSW Soccer Federation proposes to abolish the Colts and Under 16 year competitions in Super Youth League and presumably Youth League generally, from the year 2000 and beyond, so that the competition from next year shall consist of Under 13, 14, 15 and 17.

This means that 15-year-old adolescents will be pitted against 17 year-old adults.

This proposal is flawed from many perspectives but principally from those relating to player development and safety.

All those players and parents who agree with me please urgently let the NSW Soccer Federation know how you feel.

D. R. Benson
Lane Cove

WIN FRANK'S BOOK!

Yes, you can win a copy of Frank Farina's book. All you have to do is answer the question below and send in an envelope to the office and we will pull out a lucky reader who will win a copy.

The address to send your envelopes to is:

'Please send me Frank Farina's book' competition. INSIDE SOCCER 1/24 Prince William Drive, Seven Hills, NSW 2147.

Oh, and another thing, the great man has signed the book.

So for your signed copy of Frank Farina's book 'MY WORLD IS ROUND, just answer the following question and put the answer on the back of the envelope.

QUESTION:

Which Serie A club did Frank Farina play for?



DIDULICA TO JOIN ILIC AT THE VALLEY?

Olyroo goalkeeper Joey Didulica is following a familiar trail. He left on Sunday for trials at Charlton.

The offer came as a shock to the 21-year-old who never

expected in me but I never built my hopes up in case nothing came of it," he said.

Didulica, who was in the Australian squad which took on Manchester United at the MCG



Another one? ... Olyroo keeper Joe Didulica left for trials in England on Sunday. Charlton is his first stop.

expected things to move so quickly.

The Melbourne Knights custodian said game tapes had been sent to several clubs by the International Management Group and Charlton came in with the trial offer very quickly.

"It's something you aim for, playing in Europe, there's been a lot of talk about clubs being inter-

ested in me but I never built my hopes up in case nothing came of it," he said.

"I wasn't expecting to be going anywhere until after 2000," he said.

Also at Charlton is another Melbourne keeper, St Albans raised Sasa Ilic, who has gone on to represent Yugoslavia.

THE SYDNEY-BASED PRE-SEASON CARTY/FORSYTH MEMORIAL CUP DRAW ...

22 August
2.30pm: Newcastle Breakers V Northern Spirit

ELIMINATION ROUND:
MARCONI STADIUM: 15 AUGUST
2pm: Canberra Cosmos V Blacktown City
4pm: Parramatta Eagles V Bonnyrigg Eagles

EDENSOR PARK STADIUM
29 AUGUST
3pm: Sydney United V Wollongong Wolves

MARCONI STADIUM 22 AUGUST
2pm: Sydney Olympic V Winner Parramatta/Bonnyrigg
4pm: Marconi V Winner of Canberra/Blacktown

MARCONI STADIUM 5 SEPTEMBER
2pm, 4pm, Semi Finals
Double Header

NEWCASTLE BREAKERS STADIUM

PARRAMATTA STADIUM
19 SEPTEMBER
1pm NSW Police V Victoria
3pm Semi Final Losers
5pm Grand Final.

GLORY UPDATE

The Glory has had a predictably busy off-season after its epic finals foray. The club is poised to earn a \$1 million windfall with the transfer of the big defender Danny Hay to an overseas club.

The 24-year-old, who has been the Glory's fairest and best player for the past two seasons, has taken part in a week-long tour of Sweden with Harry Kewell's Leeds.

And Glory free-kick specialist, Con Boutsianis, is also being pursued by another club.

The 28-year-old, who was the Glory's joint-top scorer last season, has been offered a trial with a Belgian club.

And on the vexatious issue of a new ground, the club has also negotiated to stay at Perth Oval for one more season. The premier of West Australia has gone on record as saying the new ground will be built but of course this won't be in time for the new season.

Meanwhile, the Glory has been handed a some midweek games, which cannot be played at Perth Oval because of the lighting.

"I've already spoken to two of the three clubs



Glorious sight ... the finals in Perth at the WACA. Glory v Marconi in front of 27,000.

and I'm hopeful of switching those games to a weekend because there is a break in the season in mid-January for an international series and we could be fixed up then," club G.M. Roger Lefort said to local media.

Wednesday, 1 Sep. will see the Media Launch of the new Perth Glory strip by Kappa sport and on Friday, 3 Sept 12.00-2.00pm a fashion parade of the new Perth Glory official merchandise at Forrest Place

Pre-season games: v Adelaide City at Busselton on Sat 25 Sept and at Albany on the following Monday.

Ram



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THE SURFING MATILDA ON

By Aidan Ormond

Joanne Peters loves catching a wave. The blonde Matilda midfielder also reckons going to church is pretty cool too, and, she doesn't mind playing a bit of guitar and saxophone! An interesting combination for sure, but what makes this marketable 20-year-old even more fascinating is that she has just represented Australia in the biggest ever event for women in the history of sport: the 1999 Women's World Cup in the USA.

Recently back after Australia's early exit (Australia didn't make it past the group stage) Peters has had time to reflect on our performance and, what turned out to be, a sporting phenomenon.

Massive media coverage, players (largely American) turned into household names and soaring attendances made this a watershed event in not only women's soccer, but women's sport in general. And the reverberations are still

"In small tournaments, such as the Australia Cup, we've done well but you gotta make sure you get the points on the board in the big ones. The Americans know exactly how to do this."

The midfielder however feels it's not just games, but in the hard slog of training that will see improvement for the Australians in the lead-up to the Olympics. "Playing tournaments is important, but in the next twelve months we have to improve technically as players and through our game plan as a team, because unless you have players that can show great technical skill and use it together, you are not going to go far."

Nevertheless, Peters is very excited at the prospect of locking horns with the highly respected world champions, and playing against such household names as Mia Hamm and Brandi Chastain. "They came out here in 1997 and it was the best tournament I had played in thus far, and then going over to America was also a great learning curve. We have showed glimpses when we have played.

Sweden too provided Australia with an abrupt welcome at the big-time level. "I had developed an injury which required painkillers, but I still managed to play. As for the game, their game is direct and forceful and we were unable to adapt. We were forced into a big battle all the time. After the game I was devastated. Greg (Brown) kept saying there was one more to win. But in the back of our minds I think we felt we were going out. I think we just wanted to take out our frustrations on the Chinese by beating them."

The China game was said to be our best for the tournament, but a red-card two minutes in effectively ended any chance of a boilover against the eventual tournament runners-up. "The early send-off was harsh for Alicia Ferguson in her first start in the Cup. On TV it looked a little worse than it really was."

So she cheated? "Well (laughing) the Chinese girl made a bit of a meal of it the way she made a big somersault. She did it very well! That put us on the back foot against a world class team."

"It was pretty much silence," says Peters of the after match dressing room. "Just knowing the time and effort we had put in. We couldn't dominate the games and put away our chances. I kept remembering back to when we left Australia. We met Inside Soccer and the rest of the media at the Airport Hilton and had a very positive send-off. Everyone was feeling so good." Yet despite the obvious disappointment for the fiercely competitive player



Jo Peters (background right) with teammate Kelly Golebiewski watch as keeper Tracey Wheeler goes through her paces before the China game at WWC 99.

being felt in the US as men's sport took a back seat to women playing soccer, and playing it very well.

With the exciting announcement that the world champions the USA are due here in December to play in a four-nation tournament, Joanne Peters believes this is exactly what we need to get us up to speed in the rapidly developing world of women's international football.

As Matildas coach Greg Brown said prior to leaving for WWC 99, the Cup would be a good chance to see where we are and how are going half way through a two-year program leading up to Sydney 2000. Peters believes the results in the cup didn't lie.

"Yeah, look in the pre-cup games we played quite well, especially against third-placed Brazil. But in a tournament situation you have to be consistent and be able to dominate and control teams and adapt to their playing styles through your game plans. Other teams in the world are starting to improve very quickly and the World cup was good indication of where we're at.

them in the past of what we are capable of. Hopefully at the end of this year we can show how we can beat them in front of our fans. It should be a great tournament and I hope all Aussie fans will turn out to support their team."

Going back to the World Cup and Peters identifies an all-too familiar problem area for Australian teams. "For me personally, I was quite happy in our warm-up games. Our best match was against Brazil (who finished third in WWC). We should have won it, but what was more important was that we felt we matched them. Our only fault was that our finishing when it mattered was not up to scratch in the actual World Cup games."

So it was to the World Cup and game one against an opponent the Matildas knew little about. "Because they were so physical and they kept fouling us it was hard to get some momentum going," says Peters of Ghana. "It was frustrating with the 1-1 draw, particularly with a red card for them, but we had to put it aside because the next game against Sweden was our crunch match."

from country Leeton, the whole tournament's success provided some highlights. "It was a great successes in that the American players had advertisements and documentaries about them on TV, which is unheard of. The surfaces were like carpets and even the training facilities were just superb."

"Even we had 20,000 fans just to see us, who would have thought?"

Can Peters and the Matildas comeback from their disappointing showing and ride the wave of support for women's soccer? With training due to start full-time at the end of the month, the US tour in December will be their first big test.

If you are looking for a positive role model then look no further than Joanne Peters. But don't take my word for it, it seems everyone you speak to has a good word about the Matilda midfielder.

"Leeton High is extremely proud to have had a player who has played at international level. Even though she was only here for a short time she is well remembered and respected," said Scott White, the school soccer coach.

Peters still holds sporting records at the High School in Leeton (located in the Riverina near Wagga).

Leeton public school's principal Gayle Ekeley agreed, saying Peters was a "wonderful student, highly regarded by the staff and students and soccer fraternity, and that she has always loved her soccer and thoroughly deserves her success."

Meanwhile Mum Sue, who lives in Canberra now, recalls how young Jo would play soccer with her older brother in country Harden and Leeton, before moving to Sydney

where playing the game has become more of an on-going concern.

And Joanne's "beautiful humility" is largely due, mum feels, to her faith in God. "When she had a year off for a knee reconstruction her faith was very important to her and helped get her through what was a difficult time."

But being a Mum during the World Cup was no easy ride. "Fear and trepidation was how I felt checking the Internet when the games were completed. It was nerve-racking."

"Actually I was anticipating the bad results though. Because I have watched them play a lot, I don't think they have their attacking game plan in place," she assesses.

"If you watch the Americans they have their attacking style in place. It's not as if we don't have the players, we have Julie Murray but you can't just have one striker. That one player can easily be shut down."

And soon we will be able to watch for ourselves, when the Americans drop by for what should be a massive media event for the Australia Cup 1999.

SO WHO SHOULD BE SOCCEROO COACH?

A few weeks ago Inside Soccer was first with the news that an announcement on a new national coach was imminent. Since then, there has been widespread speculation in the media about who is the best man for the job.

The Sun-Herald, through Johnny Warren, has opted for Frank Farina. The Adelaide Advertiser is plumping for Zoran Matic. The Daily Telegraph and Sydney Morning Herald are generally thought to favour David Mitchell, while The Australian tends to support the status quo. Our tip a few weeks back was Frank Farina.

The aspirants will be interviewed on 7 August in Sydney, following the New South Wales' Soccer Federation's Super League Gold Medal Dinner on the Friday night, which all the interview panel are expected to attend.

As well as Mitchell and Farina, South Melbourne's Ange Postecoglou is to be interviewed along with the current acting national coach, Raul Blanco, and possibly Eddie Krncevic. Matic is believed to have turned down the offer of an interview.

The interview panel comprises Chairman Basil Scarsella, pictured right (South Australia), Deputy Chairman, John Barker (Tasmania), Joe Brondolino (Victoria), Greg Woods (New South Wales), NSL clubs representative, Tony Labbozzetta and Soccer Australia Chief Executive, David Woolley.

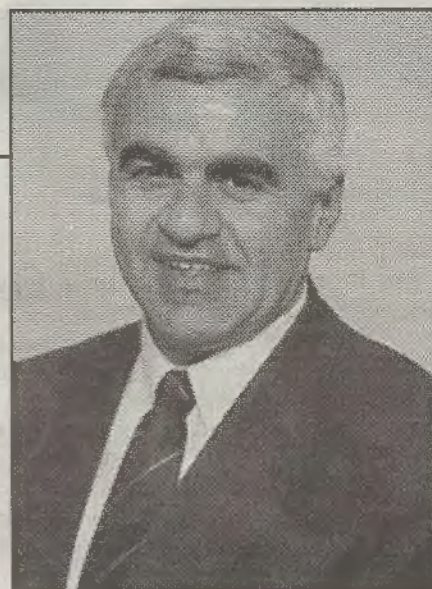
The Presidents of the State Federations are also anticipated to be invited to give a view with at least one - New South Wales' Peter Gray (who has recently been given the highly-prized position of manager of national sides under the present incumbents) - going on record strongly supporting Blanco's and Scheinflug's "experience" over the likes of Farina, Mitchell, Postecoglou and Krncevic.

At Inside Soccer, we find the "experience" argument somewhat curious.

After all, three of the candidates - Farina, Mitchell and Krncevic - have had extensive playing experience overseas as well as extensive domestic and international careers. Surely these men have earned the right to be considered "experienced" in terms of the demands of international football. They know what it takes to play at the top level, and they know what it's like to play for their country.

Inside Soccer asked a mixed group of people for their opinion. Not everyone is keen to go 'on the record' on such a high-profile issue in national football - but here are the responses we did get from a combination of media and marketing people, management and those involved in the game at different levels.

In the meantime - let's hope Soccer Australia makes the right decision and appoints an Australian coach who can lead football in this country into the next millennium.



One fellow coach who is prepared to stick his neck out is Northern Spirit coach, and former Socceroo great, Graham Arnold.

I feel that Frankie would be the quality step to take.

The people playing in Europe, who are the majority of our national side, either grew up admiring him or have played with him, and they all have enormous respect for the guy. That's the number one thing. Those players - who are all quite high 'ego' players - need to respect the coach. Frankie knows all about playing at that level.

He understands them and he's a good man manager, which is at least 70% of the job.

Whatever Frankie's done, he's been a success. He was plucked out of obscurity in Far North Queensland, got a scholarship to the AIS, played in all the national teams, was highly successful in Belgium, France and Italy, came back here and coached a team of kids to a Grand Final win.

He's a winner, and he always gives 120%.

We need a national coach like that. Someone who wants to be at the World Cup so much. Just like all of us, who have played, it's part of him. He knows it, understands it, feels it."

GRAHAM ARNOLD

HEAD COACH, NORTHERN SPIRIT FOOTBALL CLUB

Farina is the outstanding coach on Soccer Australia's short-list. His season with Marconi was perhaps as equally significant as his League championship two years ago.

At Brisbane he inspired a largely young team to championship success. He was able to get more out of young players like Hews, Harris, Bolton and Wehman in that season than anyone else has been able to - before or after him.

At Marconi, he was very impressive in the way he

managed a very experienced squad to an excellent finals run - this, despite a very sticky spell midway through the season.

The rejuvenation of an "old-hand" like Mike Smith and Farina's ability to get the most out of a young player like Chad Gibson speaks volumes for his man-management skills.

Don't forget that Marconi's late season form was done without Brad Maloney - as influential as he is, Farina was able to restructure his squad to compensate for his loss.

Last season proved that if given the resources, Farina will produce results.

He knows from experience the needs of overseas-based players and their situation in the club v country row.

He also stands alone in terms of his media profile. Farina comes across as a great champion for the game in Australia and has the ability to put a lot of the knockers in the media in their place.

He brings to the party everything that Australian football needs in a figurehead - a high-profile, charm, a belief in the game and the people involved - and the ability to express it to a very large audience. Australian football supporters desperately need someone who can lead from the front and champion the game. Farina is the man!"

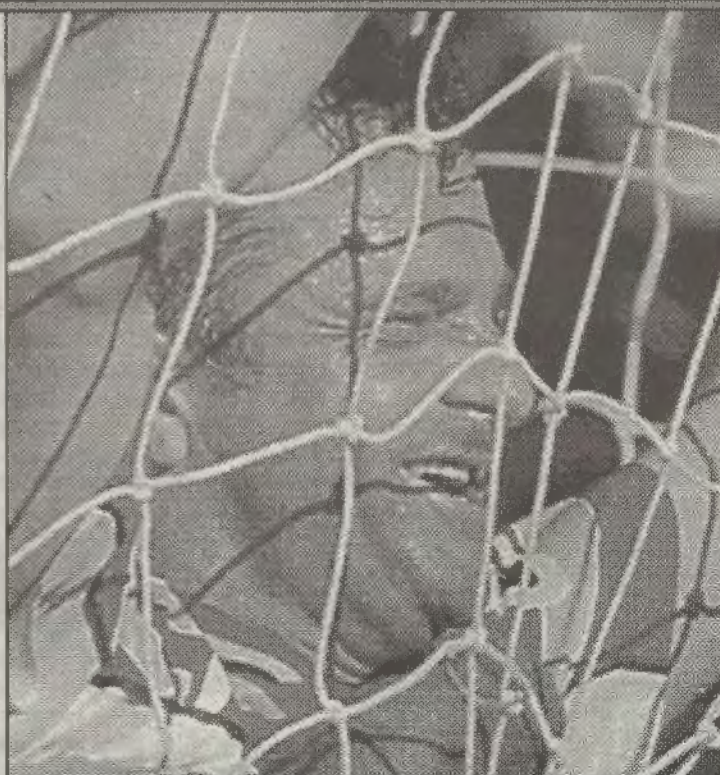
CHRIS BEATTIE, MELBOURNE

THE FOOTBALL CAVALIER WEBZINE

[HTTP://WWW.THEOFFICE.NET/THOCAV](http://www.theoffice.net/TheCAV)

I'm not a football expert. Just an admirer of the game.

With all the best players overseas, the coach needs to be based in Australia, approachable and able to represent the game with the public and the media. There's no doubt that Frank Farina is streets ahead in this area,



Those players - who are all quite high 'ego' players - need to respect the coach," says Graham Arnold of the next Socceroo appointment.

compared to the other people."

BRIAN GRACE, TOOWOOMBA (QLD)

PUBLIC RELATIONS CONSULTANT

SO WHO SHOULD BE SOCCEROO COACH?

Continued from page seven ...

With due respect to Postecoglou, I just don't think he can be compared in the same breath as Farina, Mitchell and Krncevic.

Those three had outstanding careers overseas and that counts for a lot when most of our Socceroos are also based overseas. In fact, people like these three were the inspiration for many of the players over there now!

Between the three of them, there's arguments for and against all of them. People say Mitchell is a good



New Zealand Captain Chris Zoricich ... "He's honest, straight up-and-down," is his Farina assessment.

'man manager' on the basis of his Sydney United performance but that probably proves more than anything that he's good with developing young talent.

Maybe that says something in itself and could be where his attentions are directed. I find Krncevic more difficult to assess, so overall, therefore, I'd lean towards Farina because he'd have the respect of his players, he's a good communicator and he's got that indefinable something

which you need - 'hunger' to succeed.

You get the feeling with someone like Farina that he wouldn't have looked quite so relaxed sitting on the bench (as Venables did) when we were 2-1 up and looking shaky back at the MCG in November 1997! In a sense, he's a marketing dream!

Blanco? I don't think so. Let him concentrate on the very important role of the Olympics. How we perform there will have a large say in shaping the future of the code in this country, as 'ordinary Australians' see the

Olympics as important - even if the football world doesn't consider the Olympic football tournament to count for much.

So let Blanco be, as he has his hands full with an important task which he not only has to see through - but also successfully."

ALEXANDRA STEPHANOPOULOS
MARKETING CONSULTANT

I think the national team coach in this country should not only get the results on the field - but he also must be media-friendly. We saw in the Venables era how the media could not get enough of him and he also got the results (bar the one that really mattered which we really SHOULD have had won by half time anyway).

Of the current crop, Frank Farina and Dave Mitchell would be the obvious choices. Ideally, I would like to see an experienced coach again (a-la Venables) with Farina and/or Mitchell working under him so we can take advantage of his legacy, and when he goes one of our younger coaches can come up and take the helm with confidence and experience."

CAMERON ATFIELD, BRISBANE
CADET JOURNALIST THE COURIER-MAIL/QUT
JOURNALISM STUDENT

Frank Farina for his experience overseas, passion for his country and knowledge of the players."

STUART JONES, SYDNEY
HOST, SOCCER RADIO PROGRAM 100.9FM

David Mitchell. He's got the man-management skills that are needed for the job - the number one thing about coaching at this level."

PHIL McMULLEN, SYDNEY
COACH, BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS
NSW SUPER LEAGUE, GRADE 18s

David Mitchell ... is joint favourite with Frank Farina.



I don't know the others well enough to make any fair comparison, but what I can say is that I have played with, and under, Frank (Farina). In fact, I came back to Australia in 1997-98 to play with him for the second time. He's honest, straight up-and-down. What you see is what you get, and players like that and respect him not only for what he's achieved but for his attitude. He's always so professional.

I don't see that we'd have any easy games against you guys with him sitting on the coaching bench."

CHRIS ZORICICH
CAPTAIN, NEW ZEALAND NATIONAL SIDE

Given that it's inevitable we will have a local coach, I think the best credentialled person in Australia is Frank Farina because he is the only locally-based person who will not struggle to earn the respect of the overseas-based players.

To my mind, this is the most important criterion."

REMO NOGAROTTO
CHAIRMAN, NORTHERN SPIRIT FOOTBALL CLUB

It's between David Mitchell and Frank Farina, but beyond that I've got to sit on the fence as I haven't seen enough of either of them to really be confident in my opinion."

MARK FOWLER, SYDNEY
EDITOR, SUPER SOCCER MAGAZINE

I'd like to see Eddie Krncevic get the job."

SALLY ORPIN, MELBOURNE
EDITOR, MY BLUE HEAVEN FANZINE



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RECHARGED RATCLIFFE TO LEAD 'NO-NAME' UNITED

By Aidan Ormond

There will be no superstars this year says new Sydney United boss David Ratcliffe. "Vieri didn't want to come over!" Well, there goes our front page!

David Ratcliffe is making his return to NSL coaching after a two-and-a-half year absence. Since he was "shafted" (his words) from Sydney Olympic in early 97 (ironically replaced by the man he is now taking over from, David Mitchell) he has watched the scene from afar, got back into playing social football and spent weekends with his family.

But coaching, and football, is in the blood of this rock hard Soccerroo who has been playing or coaching here for the last 20 years.

"I don't think you enjoy being away from the game, but I have been able to spend more time with the family. There is always plenty to do on the weekend while before it was just the football. I have been playing socially, but enjoy it no, I think you always like to be involved. But I have still been watching games."

Of his enforced layoff and he views it beneficially. "I think you need a rest at times. It's sometimes good to see things from a new perspective by stepping out of the game, because you get so close to the game when you're coaching, so yes it's probably not a bad thing."

Many still talk about in 95/96 at Sydney Olympic when he employed a cavalier three frontmen formation. Ratcliffe, however, felt it was more to do with personnel than anything.

"I had no intention of playing three-strikers," he explains. "But with three players like Trajanovski, Tome and Taliadoros, I had three strikers who deserved to be playing. And if I've got better strikers than midfielders than we'll go that route. Look, I took a bit of stick at the time for playing

too open but that was the only way we could play. And the fans were loving it and it was successful (they ended up second on the ladder). I don't think the club has had attendances like that since.

"Even when I coached at Wollongong, people used to say we were defensive, but I had great defenders. The only trouble was, we didn't have the strikers, or we lost the good strikers to other clubs."

Nevertheless, it is with young players that many see Ratcliffe's other coaching strengths. In 1996, a skinny teenager with a penchant for taking on players was brought in at Olympic. That was Brett Emerton.

"I am happy because I took some stick when I brought him in - they always want to buy superstars at Olympic. Look the kid can obviously play. I stuck in him in the side. He's a good player is 'Emo' and he's a nice lad and he's obviously won them over now."

So what importance does he place on youth development in his coaching ethos? "Well obviously it's important, the thing is it may have been my downfall as well. Olympic asked me to build a side because at the time Sydney United, with the likes of Moric, Kalac, Popovic Milicic, etc were starting to have a little bit of success as a result of a youth development program."

"But what the club says and what they do is two different things at Olympic. I stuck in Emerton, Bove, Gonzales and Zelic, yet at the same time these lads were being taken away by the Young Soccerroos and Olyroos. They were in one week and out the next, which didn't help the side. But look at Bove now, he's at Heerenveen and Ivan Zelic is with Adelaide City and Emerton has kicked on."

"You do get a lot of pleasure coaching the young lads because they appreciate things more. They enjoy it more, sometimes you get lads with the 'here we



Parramatta Power, sorry, Sydney United, before Grand Final 99

go again' sort of attitude, but with the kids they are dead excited about it.

"I think you get a lot more pleasure when you pick a young unknown kid and make him into a somebody. Obviously you're not totally the reason, but you can give them the chance and you become part of the kid becoming something. Sometimes it's like being an Uncle to them."

Ratcliffe obviously believes he may uncover some talented kids at Edensor Park, a traditional goldmine in the past, although probably less by design than anything else. "There will be a lot of no-names starting for us in the first few weeks! And I think they will kick-on."

"I tell you, if I can pick out young ones with talent all the time I would probably give up coaching and become an agent."

Thankfully, the break has not dulled his naturally positive coaching beliefs, which is good news for the fans at Edensor. "I'd rather be attacking," he notes. "But when we lose the ball we'll have to defend. Look, some players say, 'I didn't lose the ball all day', but these players also didn't do anything with it. You might as well stay at home if you do that."

Looking at the league's development, and Ratcliffe is believer in learning

from the successful clubs that have entered the league. "Privatization is obviously the way to go. You need people with business know-how, having said this, we can't forget the past. You need a happy medium. Some clubs can't be doing what they did ten years. Look at the way they promoted Spirit last year, despite the team not doing that well. Instead of ignoring Spirit and Glory other clubs need to learn from them."

But back to the Pumas and the side is off to China next week. Ratcliffe has visited before and believes it will be very useful. "I've been there with a very good NSW side. This tournament was agreed when United was minor premiers so obviously it's not the same side. I will take some trialists with me to see what they do under pressure. Man Utd only just beat the Shanghai side so it will be a good test. Results don't matter; at this point I am looking at seeing players."

And with Spirit, Marconi and South Melbourne all pencilled to play Sydney United in the first month, it will be a huge test for his players. But Ratcliffe has seen it all before and takes it in his stride. "Some-one likes us up there with that draw! I will have to get the sleeping tablets out again now that I am back coaching."



By Aidan Ormond

Training starts in full this week for Sydney United. It's an all-too-familiar scenario; team rebuilding centred on a squad of 'no-names' as coach Dave Ratcliffe has called them. One recognizable face however is Ante Moric.

The midfielder was part of arguably one of the best Australian rep teams, the 1993 WYC squad that made the semi-finals of that tournament. While others from that squad, such as his good friend

Ante Milicic, Kevin Muscat and Paul Agostino have forged quite successful and consistent European careers, Moric's progress has been somewhat erratic.

The 1996 grand final squad disintegrated, so he took a brief move to Canberra which did not work out, while three attempts overseas found him seemingly in the wrong place at the wrong time.

So the 25-year-old is back once again on the familiar footing of Edensor Park, not looking back and intent on showing Australians in this Ericsson Cup season that he is still the player he was in 1993.

"I am looking forward to regaining the status I had in the league a few years ago. Last year under David Mitchell I didn't really get the chance to play all that regularly," says the affable Moric. "It was tough, as was the year in Canberra, but it's all water under bridge," he says philosophically.

I wondered whether he ever regretted leaving Sydney United in the first place. "It's funny I was thinking about that myself. At times I do, but I thought a new challenge may have been good at the time, but in hindsight yes, there are some

regrets, but if you don't regret things in life then you don't achieve things.

"I definitely would like to go overseas but it's not hard to see that I am not getting any younger. This season will probably be my last chance to show myself here to get a shot overseas."

"At the end of the day it's fate. Perhaps, and I am not making excuses, there was always something that went against me, be it timing or whatever. So this season my talking will be done on the park and not in the dressing room!"

"He has coached me before in the state side and he knows what it takes to coach a side. He's done it before, he's played for Australia and is respected," says Moric of Sydney United's new coach.

And Ratcliffe's first real chance to assess Moric and other fledgling squad members will be in a four-team tournament in China, playing against Japanese, Chinese and Colombian sides. The Pumas will be away between August 12-26, and Moric can't wait.

"Yes, I am looking forward to it very much. It will be a couple of weeks when I can just focus and really tune up and play games, which is important. Training is all well and good, but playing games is where I and the rest of the squad will derive a

real fitness, sharpness and focus."

Well, I guess China is the place to get your focus. I am getting a vision of Ratcliffe and the squad meditating in a Chinese temple while doing some Tai Chi!

Confucius says, 'man with extra fitness very handy in midfield.' Moric obviously believes this.

"I am thinking of employing a personal trainer this season, just to keep me focussed and give me that edge. I want that focus from the first whistle of the first game."

"I guess you've got to make the most of this short career - if only our legs would carry us to forty! I still believe I have seven or eight years left in me and I intend making the most of every minute of it."

Going back to the WYC 93, and Moric's memories spur him on: "It was probably the highlight of my career. Not everyone gets the opportunity to do it. To have played in front of my friends, families and supporters, plus non supporters (!) in Sydney. There was no better feeling."

In an inexperienced squad, a fit and raring to go Ante Moric could be very useful to David Ratcliffe. And I get the feeling this season could his best in many years as the midfielder looks to regain his reputation in Australia.

NO LOOKING BACK FOR MORIC

IF THE FLAG CALLS NO PROBLEMO FRANK

By AAP

Marconi has promised it won't stand in the way if club coach Frank Farina gets the Soccerroo job next month.

Soccer Australia will start interviewing applicants for the national team coaching role shortly with Farina, Parramatta Power coach Dave Mitchell and former Carlton coach Eddie Krncevic all in the running.

Marconi president Tony Labbozzeta, who is also on the Soccer Australia board and could vote on the appointment, said today that if Farina was chosen he'd have the club's full support.

"It's early days to be making any predictions but the club would not stand in the way of Frankie if he got the job," Labbozzeta said.

Krncevic has met and dined with Labbozzeta twice in Sydney recently, sparking speculation that the former Soccerroo is being considered as Farina's replacement should he take the national job.

However Krncevic, who was axed by Carlton at the end of last season, is covering all angles.

Krncevic, who had a highly successful career as a player in Europe before taking Carlton to a grand final in his first year as a coach, said

he would decide within a fortnight whether to take a job in the Belgium first division.

A decision on the national job is likely to be made around that time.

Krncevic was seen as a trailblazer for Australian players in Europe where he played for Club Brugge, Standard Liege and Anderlecht.

He played down suggestions of an offer of a job at Marconi and even the national job.

"I don't know if I'm even in contention for the national job, maybe I'll get a call, I don't know," Krncevic said.

Labbozzeta has great respect for Krncevic as a player and coach and they've had a long friendship.

"There's a link that goes back a long way as he came here as a player and we won the premiership," Labbozzeta said.

Mitchell, who led Sydney United to a grand final on a shoestring budget last year, is keen to take on the national job and the feeling is that the outcome is too close to call.

The interviews could well be the deciding factor.



SOUTHERN STARS READY?

By AAP

THE Adelaide Sharks moved one step closer to survival in the Supreme Court, with creditors to consider a \$425,000 rescue package today (August 3).

If the package, backed by six Adelaide business men, is accepted by creditors, the club will make a late run to sign players and a coach before the NSL season commences on the first weekend in October.

The club must also satisfy Soccer Australia's licence requirements, including a \$250,000 licence fee and \$250,000 in bank guarantees.

South Australian Supreme Court Justice Brian Martin, who has been considering the legal complexities of the club's arrangement for the past two weeks, yesterday adjourned the case until August 9. "I am generally satisfied with what has been put up and the progress that has been made so ... I would simply allow this to go ahead to a meeting of creditors," he said.

Outside court, Sharks president Theo Parissos said the club would release a report on Monday, identifying the six business men who have put their signatures to the package.

The court heard \$275,000 would be payable to creditors 14 days after August 3, with the remaining funds available in \$50,000 instalments - four days, 134 days and 194 days after August 3.

Last Tuesday, the outline of the rescue package was presented to the court and involved a cap on administrator Bruce Mulvaney's costs of \$255,000 and a \$170,000 upfront payment to players in unpaid wages.

An allocation of funds would also be made from former player Stan Lazaridis's expected transfer fee.

The president was confident the Sharks would field a competitive team.

"We are very confident the club has a future. We wish we had more time but we will do everything possible to get a competitive team on the park," said Parissos, who confirmed the club had eight contracted players.

The Sharks next week expect to name their new coach. The club has targeted a prospect but will not sign him until creditors vote to accept the rescue proposal.

"The deal hasn't yet been done but we are confident we have the man we want," club spokesman Zis Ginos said.

"We believe we will have a strong team. We are unsure which players are legally tied to the club but one thing is certain - we are interested only in play-

ers who want to be at the club." Ginos confirmed the Sharks next season would play as Southern Stars, although use of the name was in dispute. Women's Cricket Australia also has claimed the right to use the name.

Ginos said the Sharks had registered the name with the Australian Securities Commission.

"We have written to the cricket team advising them we have registered the name Southern Stars Australia and intend to play as Southern Stars," he said.

Ginos said his team's outfit would be dark blue with a Southern Cross design on the front. Gold and red stripes would be featured on the sleeves and shorts. The club expects to hold its first training session within two weeks.

Meanwhile down in Melbourne and Carlton have won in a friendly.

On Sunday they played against a Geelong All-Star combination as part of their build up to the Ericsson Cup season, and as Carlton fanzine editor Sally Orpin reports Carlton won 2-1 with a good display that even featured coach Stu Munro on the park!

The starting line-up (4-4-2) was:

Anastasidis, Della Rocca, McPherson, Pongho, Anthopoulos; Tricarico, Marth, Packer, Lapsansky, Moreira, Ouliaris.

Subs: Thompson, Cagali, Erdosan, Notto, Grbac, Munro.

Coach Munro gave some good advice to some of the younger players while he was on, but new signing Dave McPherson came off at halftime.

Lubo Lapsansky had chances in the first half, one with a lovely free kick but it was the all-stars who took the lead through Troy Hardy, who looked quite a useful player.

Andrew Marth had a stunning header that hit the bar and the big man played well in midfield.

Moreira however equalled with a header to make it 1-1 at halftime. Lapsansky finally scored with a cannonball in the second half to win it for the Blues.

One bad piece of news, however, Moreira went off with a groin strain in the second half, and Craig Deans is out of action for 6-7 weeks with a shoulder reconstruction that was sustained in training recently.

One player for the Geelong all-stars who declined to play was one Gary Ablett, who apparently plays a bit of AFL as well as Soccer.

*Sally Orpin appears courtesy of My Blue Heaven fanzine.

KIWIS IMPRESSING FIFA OFFICIALS IN MEXICO

By AAP

The All Whites and New Zealand have so impressed world soccer officials here at the Confederations Cup soccer finals that a senior official has openly suggested they apply to host the 2001 finals.

Richard Setyon from Brazil, who has been on the FIFA committee for several years, told the New Zealand delegation at a meeting that they should consider making a serious bid for the next one.

While delegation head Mark Burgess suggested that maybe a joint bid with Australia would be an idea, Setyon insisted New Zealand make its own bid.

"You should show how well you can do things with the (world) under-17s and host it well administratively," he said.

"Once you've got the under-17s out of the way and done a good job then you should con-

sider

applying for the Confederations Cup finals."

New Zealand Soccer chief executive Bob Patterson said it would not be unreasonable thinking.

"We would support that definitely because we believe with the under-17 tournament we can show we are administratively capable of running the event," Patterson said.

"We believe the stadia that we have in New Zealand is more than adequate for running the event.

"We really need only two really first class stadiums and we could apply to use North Harbour stadium or even go south to Carisbrook and

Lancaster Park.

"It is a natural linkage that we would go for the Confederations Cup tournament because it would fit well with our goal to achieve 2006 World Cup participation."



GOALFEST!

3 GAMES 21 GOALS

By Ben Cubby

The 1999 Super League season reached its climax at Marconi stadium on Sunday afternoon as the leading clubs in NSW battled for championship honours in the under 18, under 21 and first grade competitions. The various teams turned on a fiesta of attacking football, scoring 21 goals in three games, and Inside Soccer was there to bring you all the action.

The under 18 grand final saw the all-conquering Parramatta Eagles side defeat the gallant but outclassed Macarthur Rams 3-0. Talented teenager Alex Muscat scored the first for Parramatta and then set-up Brad Moore for the second after 20 minutes.

Macarthur rarely threatened after that and Westfields Sports High student Erick Anabolon added a third goal in the second half to seal victory.

A dominant display by the Eagles midfielder George Nohra confirmed that he is one to watch.

The win was just reward for a young Parramatta team that finished top of its league, scoring 75 goals and conceding only 18 throughout the year.

The large contingent of Macarthur supporters went home happy though, when their under 21 side clinched the championship with an amazing 8-4 victory over the Bonnyrigg White Eagles. Shane Risby opened the scoring for the Rams in the first five minutes, and it basically rained goals from then on.

Marconi youngster Joe Bruni, on loan to Bonnyrigg slammed home an equaliser straight from the restart, after good lead-up work from Danny Poljak.

A fumble from White Eagles keeper Sacha Bozic put Mac Rams back in front, and the Rams then raced away to a 5-1

lead at half time.

Bonnyrigg scored twice soon after the restart, but two red cards saw any faint hopes of victory evaporate. Macarthur added three more goals against nine-man Bonnyrigg, although the White Eagles salvaged some pride with a brilliant late strike from substitute Dragan Skoric.

Konrad Leski and Danny Poljak both did well in attack for Bonnyrigg, while Ryan Jones worked hard in midfield.

Flying wing-back Gavin Cremming had a great game for the Rams, as did Shane Cevenini, Shane Risby and Kory Babbington.

Sixteen year old Matt Thompson had a strong match, enhancing Macarthur's reputation for producing and developing talented youngsters.

A powerful team performance saw Blacktown City crush Parramatta Eagles 5-1 in the Super League first grade grand final. With NSL coaches David Mitchell, Frank Farina and Graham Arnold watching from the stands, the Demons demonstrated that they are arguably the strongest state league side in the nation.

The fact that they started the match without key players Damien Foxe (suspended) Steve Berry and Jason Bennett (both injured) made the victory even more impressive.

Damien Brown signalled that he may be recruited back into the Ericsson Cup shortly with a man-of-the-match performance, and his midfield partner Damien Smith also staked his claim.

Jon Angelucci is another who looks as though he could make the step up without too much fuss.

His battle with Eagles defender Mark Revely was a highlight of the final, but the Blacktown man had the last laugh, scoring two goals and setting up



the state team of the nineties.

SUNDAY SAW NSW'S THREE SUPER LEAGUE

GRAND FINALS; 18s, 21s AND FIRSTS. IN THE

3,000 PLUS CROWD WAS INSIDE SOCCER'S BEN

CUBBY WHO REPORTED ON A REMARKABLE DAY

IN NSW FOOTBALL ...

another.

Others such as Chris Bradley, Steve Riches and Paul Yates also impressed the talent scouts

Parramatta had their chances but were overwhelmed by the stronger, hungrier Blacktown unit. The Eagles have stuck to their youth policy though and introduced some exciting youngsters throughout the season.

The pace and finishing ability of 20 year old forward Adam Anderson has been noticed by many since he re-joined the club from Northern Spirit, although on this occasion he was hustled off the ball by the bigger Blacktown defenders.

Attacking left wing-back Tony Mittiga looked dangerous when he found enough space to exploit his speed, and Sacha Utjesenovic, falls into a similar category on the right flank

Other youngsters such as Tony Panzarino, John Kelso and 17 year old George Wakim auger well for the future of the club.

Ballambou Conde has shown some touches of real class since his mid-season arrival at Parra.

The playmaker sometimes seems to have the ball on a string, with an apparent dislike for tackling his only flaw.

Only a short while ago, players such as Paul Henderson, Clayton Zane, Joel Griffiths and John Buonavoglia were honing their skills in the NSW Super League.

With the NSL continuing to expand in size, some of today's players are sure to follow in their footsteps.

More NSW Grand Final details and a wrap of the state results on page 12 ...

DENE SURVIVES HIS BAPTISM OF FIRE

By Aidan Ormond

Imagine this. You're coaching a club's youth league teams and the senior coach resigns. You're asked to take over. A week later the U/21 coach resigns and the club looks to you to take them over as well. What's more, the seniors win every league under you and the U/21s make the Grand Final and win it 8-4!

With Casey de Bruin resigning three games from the end of the season, ambitious NSW Super League Macarthur Rams decided to give a young coach a go.

Brian Dene, 35, was coaching the Youth League side when he got the big call up. The Rams seniors won their final three games under him and just missed out on a Grand Final spot.

Dene was also thrown into the job of coaching the club's Under 21 side. You could say he's been a busy boy!

The Under 21s won their Grand Final on the weekend in emphatic fashion, capturing a remarkable few months for the likeable coach.

"I am proud of this team of U/21s because I could have brought in some of the big names from the first grade who were eligible, but I stuck with the guys who had done well all year," he said after a long night of celebration.

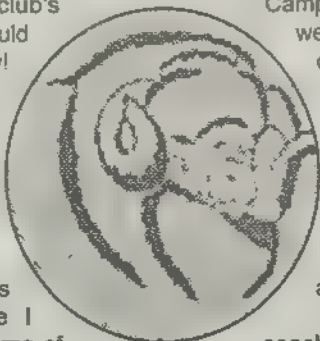
Dene also spoke after about his rapid rise through the club's coaching ranks and the year down there in the soc-

cer hotbed of Macarthur (near Campbelltown in Sydney's outer west about 1 hour's drive to the city).

"It's been very difficult after Casey resigned. The players initially wanted to coach themselves but after about a week the committee decided they needed a coach so they appointed me," he explained.

"A week later the U/21 coach, Trevor Morgan, also resigns. So it made it difficult for both myself and Scott Houghton (the U/18s coach) to get across three squads. Yes, it was tough but it was a pleasure working with professional players like John Crawley, Kain Rastall and Dion Valle.

"Initially I wanted to stick with the



senior youth league job but the committee decided on me. And I had no troubles at all with the players.

"We know each other from the past, the juggling of both squads has been a challenge but I have enjoyed it.

"I think now with the experience of a playing career under good coaches, plus getting my level three certificate, now I have experienced every part of the club's teams and I hope that I can continue to serve the Macarthur Rams."

Brian Dene of Macarthur Rams can now put his feet up after a very busy month, and his club should be commended for giving a young coach a go.

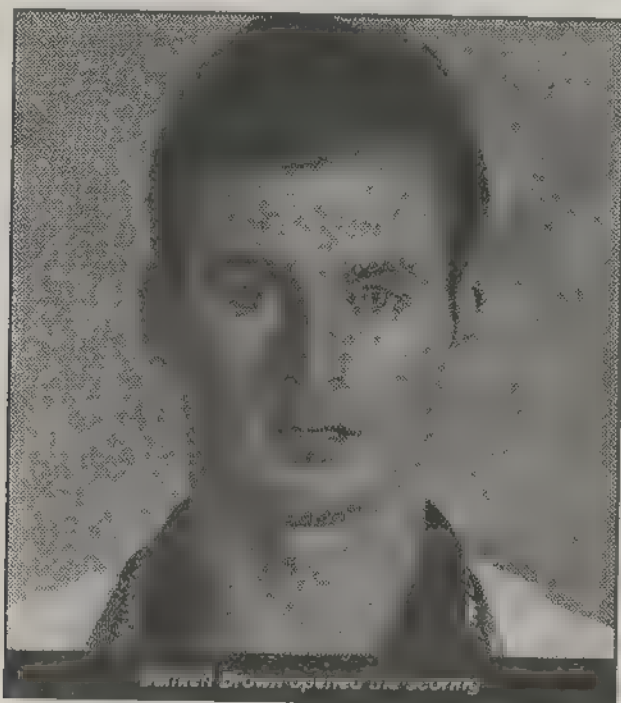
An NSL coach in the new millennium? You heard it here first.

NSW SUPER LEAGUE



Blacktown Triumph

The Blacktown City Demons took out their second Grand Final win in two years when they defeated the Parramatta Eagles 5-1 in front of a large crowd at Marconi Stadium on Sunday.



Damien Brown opened the scoring

The scoreline flattered the Demons, although as Coach Brian Brown pointed out, "Our finishing today was just awesome."

The Eagles had the better of the first twenty minutes, but on 24 minutes Damien Brown picked up a loose ball in the penalty area and was able to flick it over the on-rushing Jason Holmes in the Parramatta goal.

Six minutes later Brown turned creator, sending over a superb far post cross where Jon Angelucci slammed a header home. Parramatta continued to push forward and looked the more dangerous team, and deservedly got back in the game mid-way through the second half when big defender Mark Revely prodded home after a shot from Balla Conde had hit the post.

At 2-1 down the Eagles fans were starting to imagine some of their semi-final exploits might be repeated, but six minutes after making it 2-1 Brown again found Angelucci, and the big number seven scored another header to make it 3-1.

Angelucci then set up the next goal, rounding Holmes before crossing the ball for Damien Smith to head into the empty net.

The scoring was complete when Stuart Cleary, last years Grand Final hero, smashed the ball against the crossbar, but Aaron Holst was on hand to head home the rebound.

Damon Langan accepted the trophy with regular skipper Damien Foxe out suspended, and the Eagles were left with the realisation that they had got out of jail twice during the semi-finals, but it wasn't to be a third time lucky.

Match Stats:

Blacktown City Demons:

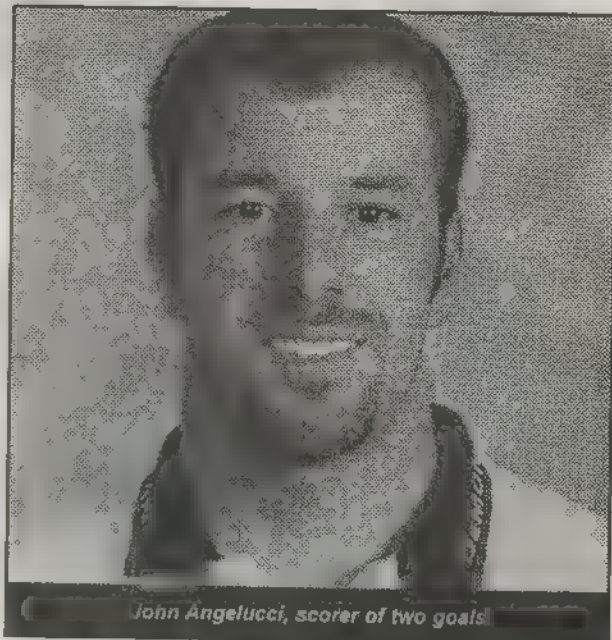
Greco, Lowe, Riches (Holst), Bradley, Langan, Angelucci, Cleary (Bennett), Smith, Yates, Brown, Sermanni.

Parramatta Eagles:

Holmes, Utjesenovic, O'Grady, Revely, Panzarino, Meilak, Bard, Islas, Mittiga (Boskovski), Anderson, Conde

Goals:

Blacktown City Demons: Brown 24, Angelucci 31, 74, Smith 76, Holst 83



John Angelucci, scorer of two goals

Parramatta Eagles: Revely 68

Yellow cards: Blacktown City Demons: Lowe, Sermanni

Referee: Brett Hugo

In the Under 21's it was Macarthur who took the trophy, defeating Bonnyrigg White Eagles 8-4 in an amazing, high scoring game.

Macarthur scored through Gavin Cramming, Kory Babington, Gary Attard, Rodney Hutchinson, Kaan Uysen, Shane Risby (2) and an own goal, while Bonnyrigg, who had two players sent off, scored through Joe Bruni, Stuart Neilson, Milan Savic and Dragan Skoric.

In the Under 18's Parramatta started their day off in fine fashion by outclassing the Macarthur Rams 3-0.

The Parramatta goals were scored by Alex Muscat, Brad Moore and Erik Anabalon.

SUPER LEAGUE:

GRAND FINALS:

FIRST GRADE:

Blacktown City 5 (D Brown 14m, J Angelucci 31/74m, D Smith 76m, A Holst 83m)

Parramatta Eagles 1 (M Reveley 68m).

U/21:

Macarthur Rams 8

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 4.

U/18:

Parramatta Eagles 3

Macarthur Rams 0

DIVISION ONE:

FIRST GRADE:

Stanmore Hawks 4 bt Bathurst'75 0, Auburn United 3 bt Dulwich Hill 2, AC United 3(D Heseyin 21m, F Screpes 49m, E Dullak 61m) bt Stanmore Hawks 2(A

Lara 59m, E Briscoe 84m), Auburn United 1(T Lara 27m) bt Manly Warringah 0, Illawarra Lions 5(A Krstevski 5m, J Kencevski 20m, V Kupresak 80/89m, V Tasevski 90m) bt Rockdale City 3(S Najdoski 39/54m, P Apolevski 57m), Moorebank Sports 3 bt Dulwich Hill 0, Hurstville City-3(J Tratselas 50m, S Kladis 54m, N Knitharis 75m) bt Bathurst'75 2(L Ackland 7m, B Mclean 87m), Penrith Panthers 2 (J Hawkins 35m, K Baloot 68m) bt AC United 1 (B Sansone 42m), Rockdale City 5 (S Najdoski 18m, K Pillay 26m, G Trposki 49m, B Petrovski 53m) bt Hurstville City 2 (N Knithakis 11/14m).

U/21:

Penrith Panthers 2 bt St George 1, AC United 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 1, Manly Warringah 2 bt Auburn United 1,

Rockdale City 7 bt Illawarra Lions 1, Moorebank Sports 3 bt Dulwich Hill 2, Bathurst'75 5 bt Hurstville City 3, AC United 1 drew Penrith Panthers 1, Rockdale City 8 bt Hurstville City 2. U/18: Penrith Panthers 2 bt St George 0, AC United 5 bt Stanmore Hawks 0, Manly Warringah vs Auburn United Postponed, Rockdale City 7 bt Illawarra Lions 2, Dulwich Hill 0 drew Moorebank Sports 0, Bathurst'75 5 bt Hurstville City 0, AC United 3 bt Penrith Panthers 0, Rockdale City 3 bt Hurstville City 1.

DIVISION TWO:

FIRST GRADE:

Greystanes 1 bt Sydney University 0, Mt Druitt Town 4 bt Hills United 1, Fraser Park 2 bt Hajduk Wanderers 1, Hurstville ZSC 3 drew Mt Pritchard 3, Arncliffe Scots 5 bt Belmore Hercules 3.

U/21:

Greystanes 4 bt Sydney University 0, Hills United 2 bt Mt Druitt Town 1, Hajduk Wanderers 4 bt Fraser Park 0, Mt Pritchard 2 bt Hurstville ZSC 0, Belmore Hercules 4 bt Arncliffe Scots 2.

U/18:

Sydney University 1 drew Greystanes 1, Hills United 2 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, Hajduk Wanderers 3 bt Fraser Park 0, Mt Pritchard 2 bt Hurstville ZSC 0, Belmore Hercules 3 bt Arncliffe Scots 0.

DIVISION THREE:

FIRST GRADE:

Camden Tigers 4 bt Liverpool City 1, The Wanderers 2 bt Colo Colo 1, Parramatta City 0 drew Gladesville United 0, White City 3 bt Prospect United 1

SECOND GRADE:

Camden Tigers 5 bt Liverpool City 2, The Wanderers 2 bt Colo Colo 0, Parramatta City 3 drew Gladesville United 3, Prospect United 3 bt White City 1.

DIVISION FOUR:

FIRST GRADE:

Sydney Crescent Star 1 bt Balmain 0, Holy Cross Ryde 4 bt Auburn Star 1, CSI Schofields 3 bt White Valley 2, Prairiewood United 3 bt Springwood 1, Nepean District 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Granville Greenisland 2 bt United Eagles 1, Marrickville 2 bt Eastern Creek Pioneers 0, Auburn Star 1 drew Eastern Creek Pioneers 1, Balmain 1 bt Springwood 0.

SECOND GRADE:

Balmain 7 bt Sydney Crescent Star 0, Holy Cross 9 bt Auburn Star 0, White Valley 2 bt CSI Schofields 2, Prairiewood United 2 bt Springwood 2, Nepean District 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, United Eagles 5 bt Granville Greenisland 1, Marrickville 2 bt Eastern Creek Pioneers 1, Auburn Star 2 bt Eastern Creek Pioneers 0, Springwood 2 bt Balmain 1.

DIVISION FIVE:

FIRST GRADE:

Kosciusko 7 bt Macquarie Sports 2 UTS 3 bt Lithgow Workmen 1, Bossy 5 bt Sydney TUSC 1, Sporting SCC 5 bt Homenetmen 2, Earlwood Hermes 3 bt Macquarie Sports 0, AVA Limited 2 bt Liverpool Olympic 1, Kosciusko 1 bt Sydney United Kings 0, Bossy 4 bt Earlwood Hermes 2.

SECOND GRADE:

Kosciusko 3 bt Macquarie Sports 0,

Lithgow Workmen 4 bt UTS 0, Sydney TUSC 2 bt Bossy 0, Sporting SCC 6 bt Homenetmen 2, Earlwood Hermes 3 bt Macquarie Sports 0, Liverpool Olympic 4 bt AVA United 0, Kosciusko 4 bt Sydney United Kings 2, Bossy 3 bt Earlwood Hermes 1

WOMENS SUPER LEAGUE

FIRST GRADE:

Sutherland Sharks 2 bt Nepean Panthers 1, NNSW ITC/Academy 3 bt Marconi Fairfield 1, UWS Macarthur Rams 1 bt Sutherland Sharks 0, Nepean Panthers 3 bt Gladesville Ravens 1, Central Coast 4 bt Shoalhaven Assoc 1, NSW INST/Academy 8 bt Sydney United 0.

U/21:

Sutherland Sharks 1 bt Nepean Panthers 0, Marconi Fairfield 2 bt NSW Inst Academy 1, NNSW ITC Academy 2 bt Marconi Fairfield 0, UWS Macarthur Rams 0 drew Sutherland Sharks 0, Gladesville Ravens 3 bt Nepean Panthers 2, Sydney United 1 drew NSW INST/Academy 1.

WOMENS STATE LEAGUE:

FIRST GRADE:

Roselands 2 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Manly Warringah 1 drew Wollongong Wolves 1, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 7 bt Bankstown United 0, Bathurst City 0 drew St George Association 0.

U/19:

Eastern Suburbs 4 bt Roselands 3, Manly Warringah 1 bt Wollongong Wolves 0, Gladesville Hornsby Koalas 3 bt Bankstown United 0, St George Association 1 bt Bathurst City 0.

SOCCER CANBERRA

Olympic Topple leaders Monaro

By Nick Guoth

Canberra Olympic continued their run towards the Finals when they defeated Monaro at Riverside Stadium by a scoreline of 1-0.

But the one goal was not indicative of the play as Olympic were all over their opponents and a final result of four or five would not have been undeserved.

The result moves Olympic only two points out of the Top 4, but they still have to play some of the very strong teams in the coming weeks. "It's do or die for us", said Olympic coach Baz Giampaolo. "We are still taking each game one at a time."

In the early moments of the game Monaro had one of their rare chances. Danny Macor fed Joe Campagna and his shot went just the wrong side of the post. The next 20 or so minutes were very hectic with both sides trying to settle in. Cosmos player Michael Musitano should have done better when he headed over from a Campagna cross.

From then on it was nearly all Olympic. In the 43rd minute the pressure came to fruition, but not in the way everyone expected. Takis Arvanitis looked up from his left-back position and sent a 40m pass across the field from his own half.

The Monaro defender mis-judged the ball and it fell to a speedy Elli Salloum. He went straight at goal and put away the one-on-one past Monaro keeper Tony Guarino. Giampaolo has been very happy with Salloum and rates him well. "He's a good asset, especially with his speed factor."

In the second half Salloum absolutely ripped apart the Monaro left-hand side defence. His surging runs down the wing were complemented by some accurate crosses, but unfortunately, the finishing left a little to be desired.

Pino Seminara was the main culprit with a bucket load of chances laid onto him. Generally it was the hard working John Nelson, playing sweeper, who had to make a last ditch tackle to save his team.

Arvanitis, Salloum and Seminara set up all the opportunities but each one was either miskicked, sent straight at Guarino or sailed wide.

Olympic's lack of scoring nearly cost them. Musitano won a free kick 25m out and Macor's freekick needed to be touched over by Angelo Konstantinou.

Lazar Simeonov, recovering from an injury came on in the second half and seemed to spark a bit of life into the Monaro side. But unfortunately, the touch left him especially when put through by Musitano late in the game.

Giampaolo said "we should have punished them to the tune of 3 or 4 nil. The team is playing quite well as we seem to have got the right rhythm and intensity."

On the other side Andrew Monterosso was not a pleased coach. "Some of the big name players need to pull up their socks. We started each half well but then slackened off."

Royals bruised, bloodied and beaten

By Greg Welsh

Defending premiers Belconnen

United took a crucial step toward retaining their ACT Premier League title by defeating the Weston Creek Royals 1-0 at Hawker Oval.

The victory catapults Belconnen back into second place on a congested league ladder with only five rounds remaining, and completes a turnaround in form for the competition heavyweights.

United led the league after seven matches before three consecutive defeats saw them languishing in unfamiliar territory in sixth position. However, victories from their last four outings have righted the ship and sent out a warning to any premiership pretenders.

Like many games fought out between evenly-matched rivals, this one was not a pretty affair. With neither side able to play confidently on a bumpy pitch, long balls from the back, aerial tussles and physical midfield challenges dominated proceedings.

Belconnen made the first serious incursion in the seventh minute when Aaron Fuller's free-kick was headed toward goal by big central defender Jason Dunn. However, Royals goalkeeper Hassan Adhami managed to touch the ball onto the crossbar, and his defence eventually cleared the rebound.

Weston responded six minutes later when striker Peter Hader latched onto a long throw from Matt Stocks before forcing a diving save from Rade Kosanovic in the Belconnen goal.

The most contentious incident of the match occurred soon after. Near the sideline and directly in front of the grandstand, Weston defender Adrian Paragalli appeared to receive an elbow to the face in backplay.

While Paragalli was treated for a bloody nose and supporters bayed for the dismissal of Belconnen striker Marko Perinovic, referee Bill Simeonovic - who was unsighted - consulted his assistant on the far touchline.

Based on that report, Simeonovic brandished the red card at Belconnen's Matt Whyte who appeared to be innocent of any wrongdoing.

The incident seemed to increase the fervour of an already intense match, and just ten minutes later the blood was flowing freely again after Dunn and Hader collided while competing for a high ball.

The challenge left Hader with a nasty gash to the head which necessitated a speedy trip to hospital for stitching.

Only a matter of seconds after resuming from the half-time break, Belconnen were ahead thanks to the individual talents of midfielder Scott Manson.

Manson received the ball just inside the Belconnen half, swept past four Weston defenders and struck a low left-foot shot past Adhami to give Belconnen a hard-earned lead.

Weston fought back tenaciously and were almost rewarded with an equaliser seven minutes from full-time. Substitute Nabil Adhami picked out an unmarked Steve Lazzari in front of goal, and Weston's leading goalscorer seemed certain to increase his tally before a splendid save from Kosanovic restored the smile to Lino

Fiorese's face.

The Belconnen coach described the win as "a brilliant victory for us," but conceded that the first-half dismissal of Whyte had cemented his side's resolve.

"It's very difficult to play against ten men," Fiorese said. "If they're organised well, and they battle hard and have got a big heart they'll make it very tough."

Royals coach Jimmy Bland was dispirited by the loss yet remained philosophical. "It was always going to be a game where there was not going to be a lot of chances," he said.

"It was always going to be the side that took the opportunity when it arose - and Belconnen did that and full credit to them, [but] it's not the end of the season by a long, long way, we're still in the top four and there's still a lot of football to be played."

Suns saved by the Rising Sun

by Nick Guoth

Yuki Onda, a hard worker both on the field and in the Soccer Canberra offices, scored the winning goal for the Capital City Suns in a 2-1 scoreline over the lowly placed Burns Club.

His goal came with the last kick of the game and saved some face for a Suns team not performing up to the standard they have shown in the recent past.

Suns' coach Bill Dojcinoski was worried before the game about complacency and it nearly cost them.

But the win sets up a great game for the next round against Weston Creek.

It also propels them to the top of the very congested League table. More importantly, they have now won seven games in a row and one more will break the Premier League first grade record.

Burns started off well and they won a free kick in the 20th minute not too far outside the box. As Suns' goalkeeper Tony Giannasca was setting up the wall, Alan Strachan took a quick free kick and all Giannasca could do was watch it sail into the net.

It took only five minutes for the Suns to reply. Ilija Prenzoski beat a couple of defenders and was then taken out in the box for a penalty.

Prenzoski took the spot kick and although 15 year old Joachim Milsom was able to get a palm to the ball the kick was too hard to stop.

Shane Lyons had a great chance to put his side ahead when Stan Blasevski sent in a lovely cross. Lyons was only 3m out, but he couldn't get his balance and eventually skied the ball well over the crossbar.

Both teams tried hard for the winner, but it was assistant coach Ian Shaw providing a long ball from the right that did the trick. Onda came in behind the defenders, then beat another before stepping and turning and sending a delicate chip into the top left corner.

Dojcinoski was not all that pleased with his team's effort, but was obviously overjoyed about the team now leading the competition. "We escaped", he said. "We didn't play too good and had numerous chances, but Burns played like a team not

deserving of their position". Dojcinoski was all praise for David Stamboliev and Ty Tran.

Burns coach Steve Bryant was happy that his youngsters are learning. "The young kids did well. They're coming of age. Joachim made some good saves and the club's got a bright future".

Deakin walk easy in run to Finals

by Nick Guoth

Canberra Deakin had an easy run against a less than enthusiastic University of Canberra when they waltzed home with a 4-0 win.

Two goals in each half sealed the result, but as always, it could have been more. Both sides were missing key players, Deakin especially with ACT Schoolboys and suspensions seeing 5 players missing.

The first goal came from a corner, the bane of University. Uni have nearly conceded more goals from set plays than they have from open play. The ball was flicked on for Mladen Rogic to slam home his volley from 10m out.

Fellow defender James Modric scored the second. Modric went into a 50-50 too strong for the Uni defender. The ball fell kindly to him and he smashed the ball past the Uni keeper from 15m out.

After the break, Deakin continued its dominance. Marcel Munoz played some lovely passes with a few of his team-mates before becoming free in his run towards goal. He rounded the keeper and slotted home from short range.

Munoz became provider for the fourth and final goal when he put through Ben Deighan.

"It was a pretty good effort", said Deakin coach Bernie Lustica. "Even without the key players we performed well."

Rod Lynes for Uni stated "we played with a lot of commitment, but we were just not good enough on the day."

Queanbeyan get on the board

By Nick Guoth

Queanbeyan City Lions finally won their first game of the season, and quite emphatically. A 4-0 drubbing of Gungahlin Juventus gives them hope that they may not finish last.

The whipping boys of the ACT Premier League finally came of age. Through their two Canberra Cosmos players, Nick Purdue and coach Danny Burt, they overwhelmed a rather lacklustre and somewhat depleted Juventus side.

Juventus were missing a number of key players, including 6 who were involved with the ACT Schoolboys, but even so, nothing could be taken away from Queanbeyan who after a number of decent performances finally achieved the rewards.

Steve Roberts notched a hat-trick and Purdue finished up proceedings with a cracking free-kick. But it was Danny Burt marshalling his troops who stood out as the key player of the game.

Unfortunately for Queanbeyan, they will soon lose both Burt and Purdue to their Cosmos duties as training is about to commence.

Premier League Division 1:	1st U23 U19
Canberra Deakin v Uni of Canberra	4-0 0-2 0-1
Belconnen United v Weston Creek Royals	1-0 2-0 4-3
Gungahlin Juventus v Queanbeyan City	0-4 7-0 6-1
Capital City Suns v Burns Club	2-1 4-1 2-2
Monaro v Canberra Olympic	0-1 0-3 9-4
Premier League Division 2:	
1st Grade:	
Belwest Foxes 3 ANU 1, Tuggeranong United 3 ADFA 1, White Eagles 3	
O'Connor Knights 4	
Res Grade:	
Belwest Foxes 0 ANU 1, Tuggeranong United 0 ADFA 0, White Eagles 1	
O'Connor Knights 2	

Table:	P	W	D	L	B	F	A	Pts
Capital City Suns	14	10	1	3	1	44	18	32
Belconnen United	14	9	2	3	2	41	14	31
Monaro	14	8	3	3	3	42	19	30
Weston Creek Royals	14	7	4	3	4	31	19	29
Canberra Olympic	14	8	2	4	1	30	15	27
Canberra Deakin	14	8	2	4	1	29	18	27
Gungahlin Juventus	14	6	1	7	1	22	27	20
Uni of Canberra	14	3	1	10	1	22	40	11
Burns Club	14	2	0	12	0	10	53	6
Queanbeyan City Lions	14	1	0	13	0	20	68	3

NEXT ROUND:	
Sunday August 8 2pm:	
Uni of Canberra v Monaro @ Uni of Canberra	
Canberra Olympic v Belconnen United @ O'Connor Oval	
Burns Club v Gungahlin Juventus @ Greenway Oval	
Queanbeyan City Lions v Canberra Deakin @ Riverside Stadium	
Weston Creek Royals v Capital City Suns @ Woden Park	

VICTORIA STATE LEAGUE

Port Melbourne proved there is genuine life in their championship challenge by defeating Preston Lions 2-0 at Goodyear Stadium on Sunday afternoon. On a day where a draw would have been detrimental to both the second and third placed teams, the Sharks simply wanted the victory more and have now, for twenty four hours at least, drawn level with leaders Green Gully on 49 points.

Port went ahead ten minutes into the second half through Stavros Dimas, who steered home a Jim Latinopoulos corner from close range, while the Premier League's top scorer Peter Kakos took his tally to 21 by beating Preston 'keeper Lupce Acevski in a one-on-one 17 minutes from time.

Preston will now be eliminated from the championship race should Green Gully overcome cellar-dwellers Sunshine on Monday night, a task which the Cavaliers should complete comfortably.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the table, the weekend proved a pointless exercise for South Dandenong, Springvale White Eagles and Altona East, meaning Altona Magic could just about make themselves safe with a win at Melbourne Raiders in the remaining Monday night fixture.

South Dandenong were on the receiving end at George Andrews Reserve on Saturday, with Harry Karl putting on a clinic for the smallish crowd.

Scoring twice and setting up Vojtek for another, he was a constant menace to a Souths side missing Billy Wright and Robert Runje in defence and Carlo Villani in attack.

Peter Psarros was on target twice for Fawkner as the Blues pushed Springvale

White Eagles closer to division one by inflicting a 3-2 defeat. And speaking of renowned scorers, Juan Nilo's recent golden spell continued with his second hat-trick of the season as Bentleigh continued their amazing scoring spree with a 5-0 demolition of relegated Westvale. The Greens have now notched 30 goals in their past seven matches, with Nilo moving his season's tally to 18, just three shy of Peter Kakos. Bulleen's specialist marksmen Vlad Babic and Danny Gnjidic were both on the scoresheet as well with the Kings driving Altona East into serious relegation trouble with a 2-0 win at Paisley Park, a result which should now see Bulleen finish in the top half of the table.

With two games played last night (after Inside Soccer's deadline) Port Melbourne have drawn level with leaders Green Gully, temporarily at least.

Green Gully's Monday night game against the bottom team Sunshine George Cross should be a formality and the three points should see them pull three points clear of the Sharks with two games left to play.

In First Division both Oakleigh and Heidelberg United strengthened their promotion claims with victories over Western Suburbs (2-1) and North Geelong (2-0) respectively.

With Lalor United only managing a 2-2 draw at Springvale City the top two have now moved five points clear of Lalor with Westgate two points further back in fourth place. Former Premier League club Werribee City, despite earning a 1-1 draw at Kingston City, seem certain to drop to division two next season with Kingston City almost guaranteed to be another of the five teams to follow them down.

Victorian Premier League - Round 24

Saturday (at George Andrews Reserve)

South Dandenong 1 (Memeti)
St Albans Saints 5 (Karl (2), Sianidis, Vojtek, Saric)

Sunday (at Goodyear Stadium)

Preston Lions 0
Port Melbourne Sharks 2 (Kakos, Dimas)

Sunday (at Paisley Park)

Altona East 0
Bulleen Inter Kings 2 (Babic, Gnjidic)

Sunday (at Kingston Heath)

Bentleigh Greens 5(Nilo (3), Papettas, Rossios)
Westvale 0

Sunday (at Jukes Rd)

Fawkner 3 (Tramontana, Psarros (2))
Springvale White Eagles 2 (Mihajlovic, Gacovski)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Green Gully Cavaliers	23	14	7	2	48	20	49
Port Melbourne Sharks	24	15	4	5	54	28	49
Preston Lions	24	14	2	8	45	34	44
Bentleigh Greens	24	12	6	6	61	30	42
Fawkner Blues	24	12	4	8	40	31	40
Bulleen Inter Kings	24	9	7	8	35	31	34
St Albans Saints	24	10	3	11	40	35	33
Melbourne Raiders	23	9	5	9	33	41	32
Altona Magic	23	8	5	10	32	42	29
Altona East Phoenix	24	7	6	11	26	36	27
Springvale White Eagles	24	7	5	12	35	39	26
South Dandenong	24	6	6	12	41	57	24
Westvale	24	4	7	13	30	64	19
Sunshine Georgies	23	4	3	16	24	56	15

Playing Monday Night:

Green Gully v Sunshine Georgies
Melbourne Raiders v Altona Magic

ILLAWARRA PREMIER LEAGUE

TOP TEAMS HELD TO DRAWS

The two top teams were surprisingly held to draws in Round 17 results of the Illawarra Credit Union Premier League.

The leader, Northern United, was held to a 1-1 draw by Shoalhaven City, who are running third from the bottom.

Adnan Alston's Port Kembla were similarly held to a draw by second from bottom, Woonona. Port wasn't able to prise open Woonona's tight defence and the lowly visitors left Weatherall Park with a well earned nil-all draw.

The draw by the second and third bottom teams keeps the relegation zone very tight as the teams prepare for the run home.

Bottom team Fernhill, with only four points, is already doomed as it is 11 points behind second from bottom Woonona and a further point from both Shoalhaven and Cringila.

Third placed Bulli, the only victor amongst the top three teams, crept closer to the lead with its 1-0 victory over Cringila Lions. It is now only two points behind Port Kembla and four points behind the leaders, Northern United.

Wollongong, with new coach, Claude Cellini, in charge was the other victor in Round 17 when they visited and comfortably defeated the bottom placed, Fernhill.

In the other game top four hopefuls

Kembla were held to a 1-1 draw by White Eagles.

ICU Premier League Standings

Northern United	39
Port Kembla	37
Bulli	35
Coniston	29
Kembla	29
W. Olympic	24
White Eagles	21
Lysaghts	20
Cringila Lions	16
Shoalhaven City	16
Woonona	15
Fernhill	4

ICU First Division Results - Rd 16

Dapto	0	W. Suburbs	1
Tarravanna	7	Berkeley	0
Bellambi	1	Warilla Wand	4
University	2	Highlands	0
Illawarra U	2	Helensburgh	1
South Coast	8	Aibion Park	0
Shellharbour	1	Balgownie	0

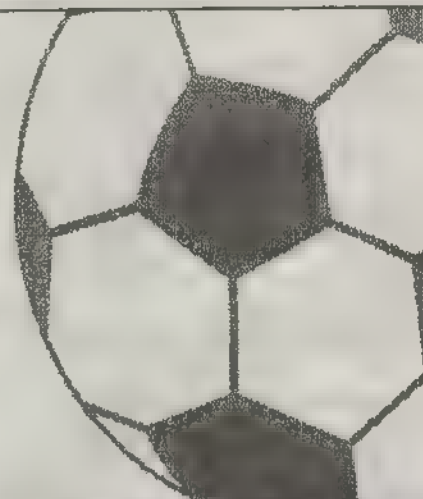
ICU Premier League Results - Rd 17

Kembla	1	White Eagles	1
Northern United	1	Shoalhaven	1
Cringila Lions	0	Bulli	1
Port Kembla	0	Woonona	0
Fernhill	0	W. Olympic	2



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PREMIER LEAGUE round 18

Woonona v Kembla - Ocean Park

White Eagles v Coniston - Brandon Park

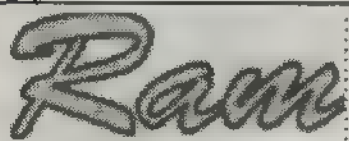
Lysaghts v Northern United - Figtree Recreation Centre

Shoalhaven City v Bulli - Ison Park South Nowra

Wollongong Olympic v Port Kembla - Brandon Park No. 2

Fernhill v Cringila - Towradgi Park

INSIDE JUNIOR SOCCER



BILL TURNER CUP



While there has been no official Media Release, Inside Soccer was assured last week that all schools in Victoria had been invited to join the Bill Turner Cup for the year 2000.

To receive accurate information inside Soccer contacted Bill Turner, who was happy to tell us just what was happening. He confirmed that, indeed, the Bill Turner Cup was planning to expand next year.

"Yes, I contacted Jim Gleeson, one of the most senior school soccer officials in Victoria relating to all schools in that state becoming eligible and certainly being most welcome to join the competition in the year 2000

"At the moment only a few Victorian schools along their northern border with NSW are playing. To do so they join with the Riverina Area and generally perform very well.

"In a previous edition of Inside Soccer, the outstanding player, now coach, Eddie Krncevic strongly supported the concept of Victoria entering in the same way as Queensland.

"Today, Queensland entries have soared to almost two hundred schools and a semifinal spot is assured. They are divided into four main areas and each area is

divided into at least two more Sub-Areas so that all early rounds are played locally.

"This same type of structure also applies throughout the whole competition in Northern NSW, ACT and NSW.

"Should the number of entries increase in Victoria to such an extent it would be logical to suggest that Victoria would follow in the same manner as Queensland

"Like Queensland, once the entries started to mount up in Victoria, it would have a snowballing effect. Schools from every Educational system would join.

"However, I had to explain the major problem to the Victorian representative - the fact that we have no major sponsor.

"If it were not for the special financial and physical support given to us by the Northern NSW Soccer Federation we may have gone to the wall

"Consequently, we do not have the finances to cover travel expenses. This must, for the present, be left to the individual schools to find. Twice in recent years schools from Cairns, in Far North Queensland, have reached the State semi-finals which are held in Brisbane. A win in Brisbane meant a trip to Newcastle to contest the competition semifinals and, possi-

bly, final

"Teams from Lithgow to Broken Hill, Wagga Wagga to Shepparton, Moree to Coffs Harbour and Charleville to Ipswich have all found some local sponsorship. Even little Tottenham Central in far Western NSW, with a population of only thirty five students, made it.

"Major sponsorship is a real problem for us at the moment but the great majority of the schools would not hear of the competition folding. It was the recommendation from Queensland that each entry for the current year be accompanied by a \$20-25 donation that is actually seeing us through the 1999 season

"Should the Victoria schools accept our present arrangements then it should be all systems go for 2000. They would indeed be most welcome"

Inside Soccer will be pleased to bring readers any up dates on this situation as it comes to hand. And if you, or know of anyone that might be interested in sponsoring a competition that can provide a business great exposure to thousands of school kids, and their parents, please contact Inside Soccer.

Bill Turner Cup Results:

Round 4:

St Peter's Maitland 2 bt Chatham 1, Catherine McGauley 2 bt Bishop Druitt 1.

Round 5:

Endeavour 3 bt Marist Brothers Pagewood 2, Pennant Hills 1 bt Oak Hill College 0, Christian Brothers Lewisham 4 bt Condell Park 1, Westfields 1 bt Freeman 1 (5-4 on pens) Daramalan 3 bt St Francis Xavier 2, Orange 1 bt Delroy 0, Notre Dame Shepparton 3 bt Cootamundra 2, Brisbane Grammar 6 bt Coolumb 0, Harnstown 2 bt St Laurence 0, Palm Beach Currumbin 3 bt Cavendish Road 2.

NSW SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE RESULTS

SUPER YOUTH LEAGUE

UNDER 13:

Parramatta Eagles 1 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Leichhardt Tigers 4 bt Manly Warringah, Blacktown City 4 bt Gladesville Hornsby 0, Sydney Olympic 1 bt Parramatta Eagles 0, Southern Branch 1 drew Sydney United 1, Macarthur Rams 1 bt Central Coast 0, Newcastle Breakers 5 bt Southern Districts 0, Sutherland Sharks 2 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Wollongong Wolves 4 bt Marconi Fairfield 1.

UNDER 14:

Parramatta Eagles 2 bt Macarthur Rams 1, Leichhardt Tigers 2 drew Manly Warringah 2, Blacktown City 1 bt Gladesville Hornsby 0, Parramatta Eagles 2 drew Sydney Olympic 2, Southern Branch 3 bt Sydney United 2, Central Coast 1 drew Macarthur Rams 1, Newcastle Breakers 1 bt Southern Districts 0, Sutherland Sharks 3 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Marconi Fairfield 2 bt Wollongong Wolves 1.

UNDER 16:

Macarthur Rams 1 bt Parramatta Eagles 0, Leichhardt Tigers 4 bt Manly Warringah 1, Blacktown City 3 bt Gladesville Hornsby 1, Parramatta Eagles 0 drew Sydney Olympic 0, Southern Branch 4 bt Sydney United 2, Macarthur Rams 1 bt Central Coast 0, Southern Districts 2 bt Newcastle Breakers 1, Sutherland Sharks 4 bt Eastern Suburbs 0, Marconi Fairfield 4 bt Wollongong Wolves 1.

UNDER 13:

Parramatta Eagles 3 bt Macarthur Rams 0, Leichhardt Tigers 5 bt Manly Warringah 0, Blacktown City 1 bt Gladesville Hornsby 0, Sydney Olympic 3 bt Parramatta Eagles 1, Southern Branch 2 bt Sydney United 1, Macarthur Rams 1 bt Central Coast 0, Newcastle Breakers 5 bt Southern Districts 0, Sutherland Sharks 2 bt Eastern Suburbs 1, Wollongong Wolves 1 drew Marconi Fairfield 1.

DIVISION ONE YOUTH LEAGUE:

UNDER 13:

Rockdale City Suns 2 bt Canterbury M'Ville 1, Hills United 2 bt Bankstown Association 1, Blacktown Association 2 bt Canterbury Association 0, Stanmore Hawks 0 drew Penrith Panthers 0, AC United 0 drew Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

UNDER 14:

Rockdale City Suns 1 bt Canterbury M'Ville 0, Hills United 1 drew Bankstown Association 1, Canterbury Association 2 drew Blacktown Association 2, Penrith Panthers 3 bt Stanmore Hawks 0, AC United 3 bt Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

UNDER 16:

Canterbury M'Ville 2 bt St George 0, Canterbury M'Ville 0 drew Rockdale City Suns 0, Hills United 0 drew Bankstown Association 0, Canterbury Association 4 bt Blacktown Association 1, Penrith Panthers 1 bt Stanmore Hawks 0, AC United 2 bt

Bonnyrigg White Eagles 0.

UNDER 16:

St George 0 drew Canterbury M'Ville 0, Rockdale City Suns 3 bt Canterbury M'Ville 0, Bankstown Association 2 bt Hills United 0, Blacktown Association 2 bt Canterbury Association 1, Stanmore Hawks 4 bt Penrith Panthers 1, Bonnyrigg White Eagles 2 bt AC United 1.

DIVISION TWO:

UNDER 13:

Nepean Association 4 bt Mt Druitt Town 1, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 0 drew Nepean Association 0, Hajduk Wanderers 0 drew Macquarie Sports 0, Mt Druitt Town 1 drew Granville Association 1, Mt Pritchard 1 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Camden Tigers 2 bt Hawkesbury City 0, CSI Schofields 3 bt Parramatta City 1.

UNDER 14:

Mt Druitt Town 0 drew Nepean Association 0, Nepean Association 2 bt Ku-Ring-Gai Association 0, Macquarie Sports 2 bt Hajduk Wanderers 1, Granville Association 1 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, Mt Pritchard 7 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Camden Tigers 2 bt Hawkesbury City 0, CSI Schofields 1 bt Parramatta City 0.

UNDER 16:

Mt Druitt Town 1 drew Nepean Association 1, Nepean Association 5 bt Ku-Ring-gai

Association 1, Hajduk Wanderers 4 bt Macquarie Sports 2, Mt Druitt Town 1 drew Granville Association 1, Mt Pritchard 4 bt Moorebank Sports 1, Camden Tigers 4 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Parramatta City 3 bt CSI Schofields 1.

UNDER 16:

Mt Druitt Town 1 drew Nepean Association 1, Ku-Ring-Gai Association 4 bt Nepean Association 3, Hajduk Wanderers 5 bt Macquarie Sports 0, Mt Druitt Town 0 drew Granville Association 0, Mt Pritchard 3 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Camden Tigers 5 bt Hawkesbury City 0, Parramatta City 5 bt CSI Schofields 2.

MAJOR LEAGUE DIVISION TWO:

UNDER 13:

AC United 2 bt Hawkesbury 0, Macquarie Sports 0 drew Penrith Panthers 0, CSI Schofields 7 bt Mt Pritchard 0, Illawarra Lions 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 1, Hills United 1 bt Hajduk Wanderers 0, Moorebank Sports 1 bt Mt Druitt Town 0, AC United 0 drew Macquarie Sports 0.

UNDER 14:

AC United 2 bt Hawkesbury City 1, Macquarie Sports 1 drew Penrith Panthers 1, CSI Schofields 3 bt Mt Pritchard 2, Illawarra Lions 2 bt Stanmore Hawks 1, Hills United 3 bt Hajduk Wanderers 0, Mt Druitt Town 4 bt Moorebank Sports 0, Macquarie Sports 3 bt AC United 0.

RANGERS GET CLOSER TO EUROPEAN CUP

Rangers new £4million hit-man Michael Mols became an instant hero with the Ibrox faithful as he blasted his side to a comfortable 4-1 victory against Finnish champions FC Haka in the second qualifying round of the Champions League.

Coach Dick Advocaat has had a quiet summer in the transfer market, adding just two players to the squad which secured the domestic Treble last season.

But what he has bought is quality and Mols' first-half double has already gone some way to repaying Advocaat's investment.

Rangers were already one up courtesy of skipper Lorenzo Amoroso when Mols intervened to almost guarantee a third qualifying round 'Clash of the Titans' with big-spending Serie A outfit Parma.

The Dutchman's first came on 28 minutes when he latched onto Neil McCann's pass on the corner of the box and rifled past the outstretched hand of Haka keeper Andras Vlnrotter.

In his first competitive match for the Glasgow giants, Mols doubled his tally four minutes before the

break, taking down fellow debutant Dariusz Adamczuk's cross and despatching a close range shot past Vlnrotter.

Mols was such a cult hero at former club Utrecht that fans of the Dutch club have already launched a Rangers supporters' club - it is easy to see why.

The first goal arrived after Rod Wallace had been pulled down on the edge of the box, Amoroso waited in eager anticipation as Claudio Reyna rolled the ball into his path.

The Italian unleashed a bullet drive, which took a minimal deflection and cannoned in off the underside of the bar.

The ferocity of the strike can be measured by the fact that Haka goalkeeper Vlnrotter was stood within an outstretched arm of where the ball entered the net but never moved a muscle as it flashed past.

Haka had already accepted their fate by the time Barry Nicholson tucked home from close range after a penalty box scramble barely 60 seconds after his introduction.

Advocaat elected to give young Barry Ferguson the responsibility of a central midfield berth alongside Giovanni Van Bronckhorst.

Ferguson's inclusion, one of only two Scots in the Rangers line-up, meant Jorg Albertz started the game on the bench.

Advocaat suggested before the game that he was more concerned about stopping Haka scoring than his own side creating opportunities and matched his words with actions by withdrawing Rod Wallace to a right-sided midfield role to counter the home side's 3-5-2 formation.

The visitors had just started to get on top when Amoroso rocketed in the first but, although Mols will grab most of the headlines for his super scoring display, Ferguson also emerges with much credit.

The tenacious midfielder snapped and harned the Haka side into mistakes in all corners of the pitch.

He even found time to fire in a shot which Vlnrotter only just managed to claw away while the scores were still level.

Reyna also took advantage of his opportunity, cutting inside from the right to good effect, then driving through the middle when used in a more central position.

Jan Niemi's far post header for Haka six minutes after the interval was a

result of a lapse in concentration Rangers can ill-afford against the Italians, who must visit Ibrox for the first leg.

Advocaat will have been pleased with the way his side used both flanks in their attempts to inflict maximum damage on the current Finnish league leaders.

Winger Neil McCann had a frustrating evening, given most of his quality possession when his teammates' minds were already thinking of the flight home.

But his link-up play with Arthur Numan showed optimistic signs and on the right hand side, former Dundee man Adamczuk settled instantly into the famous blue shirt.

However, there is no doubting that Mols was the star of an impressive Rangers show against opposition who weren't as weak as the scoreline suggests.

The Dutchman though will wonder why he didn't depart with the match ball.

Three times he should have completed his hat-trick and on every occasion the ball found its way over the bar.

Mols spooned the first chance over after Reyna's cross went fractionally behind him.

Vlnrotter pushed the second over after Ferguson's magnificent through ball and the third, probably the easiest of the trio, saw the Dutchman thump a first-time volley too high after McCann had found him inside the six-yard box.

An injury-time collision with Vlnrotter ended Mols' evening prematurely.

In other games in the second qualifying round of the Champions League Dynamo Kiev, who lit up the Champions League en route to the semifinals last season, began their campaign in the new competition with a comfortable 2-0 home win over Zalgiris Vilnius.

The Ukrainian champions are now without leading striker Andriy Shevchenko, sold to AC Milan for \$US25 million (\$A39 million) in the close-season, but his Uzbek international replacement Maxim Shatskikh quickly made his mark with both goals in the second round, first leg.

The 20-year-old, making his European debut after being acquired from Russian first division Baltika Kaliningrad last week, headed home



Rangers Rod Wallace

Artyom Yashkin's cross in the 37th minute and unleashed a powerful drive in the 78th

Litex Lovich beat Widzew Lodz 3-1 in Bulgaria, while Rapid Vienna beat Maltese visitors Valletta 3-0. Slovan Bratislava have some work to do after a surprise 2-1 defeat at Anorthosis Famagusta. Mike Ovich scored both goals for the Cypriots, including the winner from the penalty spot two minutes from time.

The potentially volatile clash between Yugoslavia's clash between Yugoslavia's Croatia's Rijeka passed off without any unsavoury incidents as Partizan notched up a 3-1 victory in front of a noisy but well-behaved crowd.

LAMPARD SCREAMER GIVES WEST HAM 1-0 WIN



Frank Lampard celebrates his goal against Heerenveen

A Frank Lampard thunderbolt gave West Ham a precious 1-0 lead to take to Holland on their InterToto Cup quest.

But the Hammers will look back on a series of missed chances which could have put them within touching distance of the lucrative UEFA Cup place they crave.

Heerenveen played some neat football and gave the Premiership club their share of scares But West Ham - and £3.5million

new-boy Paulo Wanchope in particular - wasted some golden chances as the game drew to a frantic close.

Lampard hit a post and Wanchope was twice denied in the closing stages by brilliant saves from Hans Vonk in the Heerenveen goal.

Lampard, who signed a new six-year contract after scoring the goal which assured his club this fourth-round tie, is flavour of the week at Upton Park.

The highly-rated mid-

fielder has been the target for top clubs in pre-season. But, after assuring Hammers fans he was going nowhere, he promptly added more to his value with a spectacular seventh-minute winner.

He won the ball in midfield, drove towards goal and unleashed a ferocious drive that swerved into the top corner past the despairing dive of South African international goalkeeper Vonk.

Despite the perfect start, the Hammers failed to capitalise in the first half. They opened with urgency and energy but after going ahead allowed the visitors back into the game.

Heerenveen began to find their rhythm and passing movements that had been broken down by English exuberance in the opening stages, suddenly looked dangerous.

The Hammers opened well, even before Lampard's strike. Neil Ruddock was inches away from meeting a Marc Keller free-kick in front of goal, and Wanchope saw a header blocked after skilful play by Lampard on the night.

Lampard smashed his team ahead and then helped create a gilt-edged

chance for Wanchope to mark his debut with a goal within a minute.

The goalscorer released Paolo Di Canio down the right, and the Italian lifted a cross on to the head of his Costa Rican strike partner only for the ex-Derby man to plant his header over.

Heerenveen steadied themselves after the robust East End welcome and enjoyed some success in midfield.

Yugoslav striker Radoslav Samardzic caused the Hammers' back-line problems. His shot was deflected wide after he was allowed to turn on the edge of the box in the 26th minute.

Then he stung the palms of Shaka Hislop with a vicious left-foot free-kick from wide on the Heerenveen right.

The lively striker then linked up well with Jeffrey Talan to set up Harris Huizingh in front of goal, but a diving block from Rio Ferdinand saved the Hammers.

Redknapp shuffled his pack at half-time, bringing John Moncur on for Keller and switching to a three-man defence.

The home side came back out with the same

urgency they had produced from the kick-off. Di Canio and Steve Lomas both had efforts saved by Vonk.

Scott Minto escaped with a clumsy challenge on Arek Radomski. The Dutch wanted a penalty, but referee Edgar Steinborn gave a free-kick against Radomski for handball as he grabbed the ball on his way to ground.

West Ham went after the second goal which would make their task in Holland much more straightforward.

Trevor Sinclair booked for dissent in the 55th minute, shaved a post with an acrobatic volley, and Wanchope rolled a shot wide when he had Di Canio well-placed to his left.

Heerenveen went close at the other end. Talan twice created but missed decent opportunities, and a Lomas tackle denied Radoslav Pahlplatz when he looked certain to equalise.

But it was the Hammers who turned up the heat in the closing stages, looking for the second goal.

Wanchope broke and crossed for Lampard, whose effort hit the post, and then Moncur released

the Costa Rican only for his right-foot drive to be turned away by Vonk.

Moments later Kitson blazed high over the bar when it looked easier to score, and Wanchope was again denied by the goalkeeper who clawed away a header.

In the other Intertoto Cup "semi-finals", Juventus finally found their goal touch with a 4-0 first leg thrashing of Rostselmash Rostov in Russia.

The Italians, who scraped through on the away goals rule after a 0-0 home draw against Romanian side Ceahlau Piatra Neamt last week, were helped by two second half goals from Filippo Inzaghi.

Metz, one of a trio of French teams left in the competition that provides three UEFA Cup places, hammered Polonia Warsaw 5-1. Rennes beat Austria Vienna 2-0 while Montpellier drew 1-1 at MSV Duisburg.

Trabzonspor fought from 2-0 down to draw 2-2 at home with Hamburg SV while West Ham United beat Dutch visitors Heerenveen 1-0.

CONFEDERATIONS CUP

US BEAT GERMANY TO MAKE SEMIS

USA 2 - Germany 0

Ben Olsen and Joe-Max Moore scored beautiful goals, helping the United States stun Germany for the second time this year with a 2-0 victory to advance to the semi finals of the Confederations Cup before 53,000 at Jalisco Stadium.

The United States, the Group B runner up will face host Mexico, the Group A winner in Mexico City with a crowd approaching 115,000 expected at Azteca Stadium. In the second semifinal, Brazil (3-0), which finished atop Group B, will meet Saudi Arabia.

In 16 matches played between the two teams in Mexico City, Mexico has won all but one contest, but that 0-0 draw came on November 2, 1997 during qualifications for World Cup '98 in France. The Americans kept the Germans scoreless for the second time in 1999 and helped further erase the bad taste of the '98 World Cup, where Germany beat the U.S. 2-0. On February 6, the U.S. defeated Germany 3-0 in Jacksonville, Florida.

"We're very happy with the result," U.S. coach Bruce Arena said. "We prepared well, and we had a great game. I'm proud and satisfied with my players . . . I

think we'll have trouble with Mexico, because it's one of the favorites. But we're going to prepare ourselves well."

Two days after losing to Brazil 1-0, Arena used only five starters from that match to face Germany, knowing a draw or victory would mean advancement to the semis.

Goalkeeper Kasey Keller, midfielder John Harkes and midfielder Cobi Jones did not play. Strikers Brian McBride (15 minutes) and Ernie Stewart (25 minutes) came on as late reserves. Defender Carlos Llamosa suffered a leg injury against Brazil and did not play either.

"My rationale (for the changes) was that I knew we could advance, but in order to play well in the semifinal on Sunday we couldn't afford to use the same players for three games in five days," Arena explained. "We felt that this group could at least get one point and maybe even the victory, so we're obviously pleased with the outcome of the match."

Surviving defensive disorganization in the first 20 minutes, the Americans went on to dominate this match with the Germans showing increasing frustration as time wore on.

The U.S. took the lead 1-0 in the 24th minute. Midfielder Frankie Hejduk carried deep

into the right corner and crossed to Paul Bravo on the near post. Bravo, with his back to the goal, touched the ball with the outside of his right foot a yard back to midfielder Ben Olsen used the outside of his right foot to drive the ball eight yards just inside the right post.

After Bravo was fouled badly near the German penalty area, Joe-Max Moore beautifully curled a right-footed free kick over four-man wall perfectly into the top left corner just beyond the fingertips of Jens Lehmann for a 2-0 advantage in the 50th minute.

Line-ups:

United States: Friedel, Agoos, Balboa, Brown, Hejduk, McKeon, Williams, Lewis, Olsen (Stewart 65), Moore (Kirovski 83), Bravo (McBride 77).

Germany: Lehmann, Linke, Worns, Matthaeus, Heinrich (Dogan 42), Gerber (Maul 75), Wosz, Schneider, Heit (Rink 60), Neuville, Preetz.

Scoring: United States - Olsen 24, Moore 50.

Yellow Cards: United States - Olsen 33, Hejduk 39, Agoos 47. Germany - Gerber 60, Worns 75, Matthaeus 81, Rink 92.

Attendance: 53,000

NEW ZEALAND GALLANT IN DEFEAT

New Zealand was a gallant loser in its last Group B match at the Confederation Cup in Mexico.

Playing against the mighty Brazil the New Zealanders put on a brave show and at times seemed to be the more threatening team as it piled on the pressure against a Brazil team that had already qualified for the semifinals after its second victory in as many starts.

Jalisco Stadium hosted a football fiesta as Brazil faced a determined New Zealand. The opening minutes of the match saw great saves by New Zealand 'keeper Utting.

The Kiwi's then went on to mount attacks and pressure Brazil. A spectacular first-half shot by Marcos Paulo from outside the area two minutes into injury time gave the South Americans a one nil lead. After the break, New Zealand continued to press the Brazilians but it was a Ronaldinho free-kick late in the game that increased the South American champions' lead by two.

Ronaldinho scored his 3rd goal in as many matches played in FIFA Confederations Cup. He is the 2nd player to score in 3 matches in a row.

In 1997, Brazil's Romario netted once against Mexico (1st round, 3-2) and Czech Republic (semifinals, 2-0) and a hat-trick against Australia in the

Championship final (6-0).

Ronaldinho equalled Mexico's Luis Garcia in 7th place of the all-time scoring rankings, led by Cuauhtemoc Blanco and Romario with 7 goals scored.

This was the 11th win in a row for Brazil in 1999. The Brazilian team won 2 friendlies before the beginning of Copa America, 6 matches to win the South American Championship, and all three 1st round matches of the FIFA Confederations Cup. Brazil's 1999 record includes also another win, one draw and one defeat: the loss occurred in the 1st match of the season played against South Korea (1-0) in Seoul on 28 March.

New Zealand: Utting, Zoricich, Douglas, Bunce (Velicich 82), Burton, Lines, Jackson (Perry 85), Ngata (Coveney), Atkinson, Bouckennooghe, Nelsen.

Brazil: Dida, Evanilson, Flavio, Christian (Ronaldinho 64), Alex, Cesar, Luis Alberto, Marcos Paulo (Roni 56), Athirson, Beto, Warley.

Scoring: Marcos Paulo 47, Ronaldinho 88.

Yellow Cards: New Zealand: Jackson 27, Nelsen 81.

BRAZIL TOO GOOD FOR USA

Despite losing 1-0 to Brazil on Ronaldinho's goal in the 12th minute before 54,000 at Jalisco Stadium, the Americans needed only a draw (or defeat) with Germany (see story above) to advance to the semifinals of the Confederations Cup.

Brazil (2-0, 6 points, plus-5 goal differential) virtually assured winning Group B, but the U.S. (1-1, 3 points, 0) maintained its advantage over Germany in goal differential. The top two teams after Friday's play advanced to play the top pair of Group A finishers.

It was a good showing for the U.S. which held its own against the tournament favorite, and the Americans even controlled the latter part of the second half, though Brazilian goalkeeper Dida whose only test for the evening was stopping Joe-Max Moore's penalty kick to preserve his nation's 1-0 advantage in the 72d minute.

"I think it was a very good game, tactically, by both teams," said U.S. coach Bruce Arena. "We got our opportunities in this match, and that's really all we could ask for."

The game-winner came off the head of Brazil's 19-year old sensation Ronaldinho. Serginho made a run deep into the left corner past Frankie Hejduk and crossed into the goal mouth. Ronaldinho stepped in inside of defender Carlos Llamosa, jumped and drove his header from six yards out into the far right corner. Keeper Kasey Keller had no chance save the shot.

The U.S. was not content to sit back and defend, outshooting Brazil 13-8. Though the Americans repeatedly brought back numbers behind the ball, they also managed to counterattack. On several occasions in the match, nice combinations of passes set up attackers in areas close to or in the Brazilian penalty area. The U.S., however, was undone by hor-

rendous shooting, when it managed to get a shot off at all in these situations.

The U.S.'s best chance of the first half came in the 30th minute after defender Jeff Agoos played a long, accurate ball down the left flank to Cobi Jones. The midfielder squirted into the area past Evanilson and cut the ball back into the path of Brian McBride. McBride's 16-yard blast was blocked down to the feet of Jones, and his weak shot was easily grabbed by Dida.

A sensational effort by U.S. defender Robin Fraser in the 63d minute allowed the U.S. to remain close. Second-half substitute Warley dribbled free on a breakaway. Fraser made up significant territory, caught up to the Brazilian, nudging him slightly off the ball so he could not manage a hard shot.



SAUDIS SHOCK EGYPT WITH 5-1 WIN TO GO INTO SEMIS

Mexico squeaked by Bolivia and Saudi Arabia crushed Egypt sending the victorious sides into the semifinals of soccer's Confederations Cup.

Mexico won Group A in the eight-nation FIFA tournament, gaining the right to remain in Mexico City and face the United States.

"The Saudis have the unenviable task of travelling to Guadalajara for Sunday's other semifinal to face Brazil, which clinched Group B."

The remaining squads - New Zealand, Egypt and Bolivia - have been eliminated.

A second-half goal from beleaguered midfielder Francisco Palencia was all Mexico could

muster in their 1-0 win over Bolivia in front of a demanding crowd of 50,000 in Mexico City's Azteca stadium.

In an earlier match Saudi Arabia, fuelled by a four-goal outburst from striker Marzouk Al Otaibi, thrashed Egypt 5-1 in a match that saw three Egyptians sent off by Paraguayan referee Ubaldo Aquino.

After being booed off the pitch on Tuesday following a 2-2 draw with Egypt, the Mexicans appeared to suffer from jitters in a first half marred by misdirected passes and few clear scoring chances.

Palencia, the object of much of the crowd's scorn, gained some vindication by heading into an open net after Bolivian goalkeeper Jose Carlo Fernandez misplayed

a corner kick at the 52nd minute.

"There was a bit of pressure," Palencia said after the game. "But we managed it well and were able to gather strength as the match progressed."

Egypt, meanwhile, had its dreams of qualifying for Sunday's semifinal crushed by a surprising Saudi side which was humbled in a 5-1 loss to Mexico on the previous Sunday.

Al Otaibi began the Saudi onslaught in the eight minute, lunging to boot home a rebound of his own shot off the post.

But a nine-minute first-half nightmare for the Egyptians' quickly put the game out of hand.

The Saudis were helped by the early dismissal of Egypt's Abdelstar Sabry and Hazem Emam.

NEW MILLENNIUM WEMBLEY

Four giant masts were heralded as the 21st century replacement for Wembley's Twin Towers as plans for the new National Stadium were unveiled.

The new stadium, which is scheduled to open in the summer of 2003 after massive renovations begin next autumn, dwarfs the current structure and was hailed as the best sporting arena in the world as well as the centrepiece of England's 2006 World Cup bid.

The project will cost a total of £475million to complete, well above initial estimates of £320 million as a "deliberate commercial move" due to a six-fold increase in facilities for supporters.

The 90,000-capacity, three-tiered futuristic stadium will offer supporters more leg-room in the seats as well as upgraded toilets, catering facilities, lifts and escalators, along with unrestricted views and a partly-retractable roof.

A total of 1,000 permanent jobs will be created as the new Wembley will also boast the biggest banqueting hall in London, a five-star hotel, a museum, 100,000 sq ft of office space, three restaurants and increased corporate hospitality.

The scale of the structure is simply breathtaking, with the new stadium being more than twice the height of the current ground and filling a much larger area on the ground.

However, the controversies which have dogged the project ever since its inception refuse to go away completely and the latest surrounds the proposed halving of the on-site car parking capacity, with just 1,500 spaces.

The most long-running debate has meanwhile centred over the future of the Twin Towers, for so long the symbol of the stadium built in 1923 but which will now be pulled down.

Lord Foster, head of the team of architects, explained: "The towers are suspended up there, sitting on top of fresh air, they are shells made up of reinforced concrete

only a few inches thick and can't be taken down.

"Nothing is impossible but it has a price. You would have to put a cage around them to hold them together, then a trolley to move them and also some land to store them on before transporting them back.



"You would need a pretty powerful reason to do that. They were emblematic of their time in 1923 but that was a long time ago

"Maybe they could end up like the remnants of the Berlin Wall - everyone got a piece of that."

The possibility of selling up chunks of the towers may do little to appease traditionalists but organisers behind the new stadium insist that in time they will be replaced in both folklore and the imagination by the four giant masts.

The masts, which are a massive 137m tall, hold the roof in place to ensure that there are no columns blocking the views of fans within the stadium and, in

many ways, resemble massive fishing rods straining to keep hold of their prey

They will be four times the size of the Twin Towers and would be able to be seen from central London and are supported by a 'halo' structure around the stadium which is 1km long.

Culture Secretary Chris Smith declared: "Norman Foster has come up with an excellent response to that problem of the Twin Towers, which is to create a 21st Century equivalent in the shape of the four masts, which will become a major feature of the London skyline."

Another option put forward was to retain the memory of the Twin Towers by building smaller replica versions at the start of Olympic Way.

However, Wembley National Stadium Limited chairman Ken Bates dismissed the idea and insisted: "The significance of them is their majesty and they would be dwarfed by the new stadium."

Bates also addressed the parking

issue, insisting that it was both Government and local council policy to take traffic off the roads by placing an increased reliance on public transport.

A task force has been set up including Brent Council and development agencies to address the whole question but it would appear that the new National Stadium could be engulfed in traffic chaos unless rail links are improved before it opens

Bob Stubbs, chief executive of the Wembley National Stadium Limited, declared: "There has been a chronic under-investment in infrastructure over the years and we can't be expected to pay for it. It is up to the taskforce."

At least, the plans for the new stadium are on schedule, with the last game set to be played there expected to be next year's FA Cup final.

The ground will also be the home for Rugby League, while there are plans to bid for major athletics championships as well as the Olympics, with a rigid deck able to be put in place 6.5m above the pitch to hold the track

Above all though, it is the new home of English football and architect Lord Foster insisted that while it was a new-age design, it was nevertheless still steeped in the "traditions of the past".

The pitch will continue to run East-to-West, the stadium will still be bowl-shaped the Royal Box will stay in the same place and the famous steps up which Bobby Moore and Bobby Charlton have climbed to respectively lift the World Cup and European Cup remain.

The semi-retractable roof will also mean that the sunlit days of FA Cup finals can continue, while the turf will remain just as spectacular.

Bates concluded: "Many stadiums are a compromise and spectators suffer from poor views and facilities despite impressive facades. The new Wembley will put supporters first. It is something out of this world."

ENGLISH REFEREES WIRED FOR SOUND

English referees are set to follow their Australian Rugby League counterparts when they and their assistants are wired for sound at every Premiership match this season.

Officials are to be kitted out with a radio and ear piece so they can keep in contact with each other during top flight clashes.

Premier League Referees' Officer Philip Don confirmed: "I would be hoping that we will be using it in every game and not just this season."

"We'll be reviewing and evaluating it during the season and we'll take it from there."

The idea was first used at several FA Youth Academy matches earlier this year before referee Stephen Lodge was chosen to pilot the scheme in the Premiership at the Liverpool-Tottenham game in May.

Lodge ditched it at half time but Don - who witnessed it in operation at an FA Youth Academy festival in Staffordshire - said: "We've looked at the frequencies and streamlining the system, and we've sorted that out.

"They've got to get used to running with it and operating it, but generally speaking it's gone all right and it's helped referees improve their control of the game."

"It's something we've talked to FIFA about and they're happy with us to experiment with it."

As well as having to deal with the new radio system, the men in the middle will be paying extra attention to gamesmanship such as diving this season.

Don explained: "I've had meetings with managers and referees, and we've talked about the FIFA directive regarding simulating to deceive, which is diving. We're saying that players who dive will be cautioned

"What we're also saying is the image of the game is suffering due to the amount of foul, abusive and insulting language there is at the moment. Where that language is wilfully directed at the match officials, the referee will be taking action."

"We've said to referees they've got to apply the law. I've told them, don't over-react but apply the law."

MURDOCH IN TELEVISION WIN OVER GOVERNMENT

A British court has rejected claims that the exclusive selling of broadcast rights for English Premiership soccer was against the public interest.

The Restrictive Practices Court threw out a charge by the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) which accused Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB satellite broadcaster of enjoying a monopoly over live Premiership football action, thereby infringing choice and increasing the cost of viewing.

"They are not against the public interest," said presiding judge Justice Ferris, referring to BSkyB's current Stg670 million (\$A1.66 billion) contract for exclusive broadcasting rights to live soccer.

If upheld the OFT claim could have forced a sea-change in the nature of British soccer broadcasting with severe implications for Premiership football clubs.

Vic Wakeling, managing director of BSkyB channel Sky Sports, called the ruling "a victory

for common sense."

BSkyB stock immediately profited from the ruling, showing a gain on the day of 10 pence at 575 pence.

Shares in leading English club Manchester United also rose, gaining 3.5 pence to 215.5 pence.

Richard Chorley of the Coalition of Football Supporters told Sky News the verdict upheld the public interest.

"There are still vast, vast issues that remain to be answered, questions relating to pay-per-view," Chorley said.

"We think it is absolutely imperative that those running the game start taking more notice of supporters interests. We'd like to see this as a step towards more active cooperation."

The Director General of Fair Trading, John Bridgeman, had insisted that the BSkyB deal, which allowed for live coverage of just 60 of 380 matches played each season between 1997 and 2001, was restrictive for viewers.

The BBC's Stg73 million (\$A181 million) contract for cov-

erage of match highlights was also at stake in the probe.

The OFT argued that regional or dedicated club channels would make more games available to fans, who are currently forced to part with more than Stg20 (\$A50) each month to watch BSkyB's limited live schedule

But the Premiership, BSkyB and the BBC had vehemently opposed the complaints.

The league argues that its survival hangs on exclusive collective selling. It insists that top-flight players and state-of-the-art stadiums have all been financed by the current media regime

Clubs argue that if the floodgates were opened to competing broadcasters, the gulf between the richest clubs and the less fashionable teams would increase.

That argument was backed by evidence from the government's Football Task Force and a string of soccer managers and pundits during the court case.

ANELKA AND ARSENAL AT WAR OVER TRANSFER

The Nicolas Anelka saga continues with the news that Real Madrid is about to swoop after the move to Lazio fell through.

The French striker was taken off the transfer list and told to report back for training after his proposed £22million move to Lazio fell through.

But so far he has snubbed the Highbury hierarchy and stayed in Paris, claiming to be unfit for duty due to stress.

Wenger retaliated by saying: "We have told him to come back. He has refused to come back. For me that is the end of the story."

"It is very frustrating that the club should be treated like this. The club has its pride."

"You have to respect your fans and the club. For me it was the last chance. It would be very

year agreement.

Wegner has stated that Arsenal value Anelka at £30million and have reduced the price in order to conclude a deal.

Highbury vice-chairman David Dein is furious that Anelka's two older brothers Claude and Didier, who also act as his agents, appeared to be the prime movers in trying to cash in on the huge asset of their sibling's impressive, if still less than fully developed talent.

Dein, the power behind chairman Peter Hill-Wood's throne at Highbury, has always maintained he would refuse to surrender to player-power - not only for Arsenal's sake but for all clubs.

When it became clear that Spanish giants Real Madrid were leading the hunt for Anelka, Arsenal reported them to FIFA for an alleged illegal approach.

And when Real backed off, Anelka - who had said they were the only club he wanted to join - soon attached himself to Lazio's interest in similarly single-minded terms and even wrote to Juventus, warning them off when it appeared they might want to bid for him.

Arsenal paid only around £500,000 as compensation to Paris St Germain when snatching Anelka from the French club under the new Bosman transfer laws two years ago and it would be easy for them to make a huge profit on him.

But the Highbury club stated: "It has always been our wish to retain his services because he is an exceptional talent."

And it is clear Arsenal remain confident they could still collect their current asking price for Anelka should they finally agree to let him go to the highest bidder.

The player, meanwhile, has consulted solicitors and is said to be confident he could be handed an EU legal ruling to buy his way out of his Arsenal contract fairly cheaply and put in jeopardy the entire retain-and-transfer system which currently operates in the Premiership and in Europe.

Other legal advice suggests it would be a long, drawn-out procedure, at best.

But the first impact of the mess is likely to be suffered by Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger as he prepares his squad for the new season and a fresh challenge to Manchester United's dominance both at home and abroad.

And Wenger, who now has Nwankwo Kanu as his only fit striker - with Dutch pair Dennis Bergkamp and Marc Overmars both injured with ankle strains - finds his own problems piling up.

England goalkeeper David Seaman missed the Charity Shield match after damaging a calf muscle in the last minute of a 1-1 pre-season friendly against Wenger's former club Monaco in France.

And skipper Tony Adams, the rock of Arsenal's famously stoic, but undeniably ageing defence, will miss the first few weeks of the season after a hernia operation

HASSELBAINK JOINS MONEY CHASING TRAIL

Leeds United have turned down a transfer request from want-away striker Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink and will continue trying to persuade him to accept a new contract offer.

But Leeds chairman Peter Ridsdale admits that Hasselbaink's future at Leeds looks bleak if he continues to demand wages far above the £20,000 a week received by the club's top paid players.

And Ridsdale vowed that Leeds, who have turned down a £10million bid from Atletico Madrid for Hasselbaink, will hunt out a replacement for the Dutch striker if he continues to hold out for a better deal.

"We want a team that is committed to win things with Leeds United and if a player, no matter who he is, is not prepared to be part of that I don't look on it negatively and say it is a blow," said Ridsdale.

"I ask myself what can I do to make sure the void is filled with somebody of equal if not better quality."

Hasselbaink has been Leeds' leading goalscorer for the last two seasons but he handed in a transfer request after refusing a new contract offer.

Leeds boss David O'Leary insists the Elland Road hierarchy have offered Hasselbaink all they can.

"The club cannot do any more. It's up to Jimmy," O'Leary said.

"What he is looking for I don't think any club in the country could afford and I don't think there is anyone on that kind of money over here (in

England)."

O'Leary claimed Leeds had already offered the Dutchman "the biggest contract in the club's history."

But Atletico president Jesus Gil has offered a massive £40,000 per week to the Dutch striker to prise him away from Elland Road.

And Gil is not prepared to give up the chase whatever the implications for Leeds.

"We have made a good offer and we will carry on chasing him until we make the signing even if it upsets Leeds," Gil said.

Hasselbaink was unknown in the English game until two summers ago, when then manager George Graham spent £2million to bring him from Boavista to Elland Road.

He was an immediate success, scoring 22 goals in all competitions in his first season - earning a call-up for Holland's World Cup squad - and following that up with 20 goals last term.

But that success brought covetous glances, and Atletico Madrid have twice tried to persuade Leeds to sell him.

Leeds have refused until now - "we have not spent £15million just to go and sell our top scorer from the past two years," chairman Peter Ridsdale said - but Hasselbaink's transfer request casts a different light on his future.

The Dutchman will have been tempted by the higher cash rewards on offer in the Spanish League, and Leeds will not be able to match that.

The Yorkshire club may consider a cash-plus-player deal with Atletico outcast Juninho moving in the opposite direction, but the Brazilian midfielder's wage demands may also prove prohibitive.

PLAYERS LOOK FOR LAST-MINUTE TRANSFERS

Tottenham and Aston Villa are braced for a tug-of-war in their bid to land the services of Wolves wonderkid Robbie Keane.

George Graham and John Gregory are locked in a race to make Keane the most expensive teenager in English football while the Molineux club stick to their £6million asking price.

Villa have already had a £5million bid turned down by Wolves boss Colin Lee, but Gregory is expected to step up the pursuit for the 19-year-old Republic of Ireland international now they have returned from a pre-season tourna-

nival bid.

Wolves agreed to sell Keane to Bryan Robson's Middlesbrough last month for £6million, only for the player to say no to the move.

Wolves manager Lee confirmed that Spurs have made fresh inquiries about Keane. But he and managing director John Richards have both said the player will not be sold on the cheap.

"Nothing has changed as far as we are concerned," said Lee.

"Robbie is still our player and we have to prepare as if he is going to be here at the start of the season."

Lee, meanwhile has been to watch Ade Akinbiyi, his top target if Keane should leave, play in Bristol City's recent home win over Manchester City.

Meanwhile, England soccer international Paul Ince has completed his Stg1 million (\$A2 50 million) move to Middlesbrough from Liverpool. Ince, 31, has signed a three-year contract and will line up alongside England teammate Paul Gascoigne in the Middlesbrough midfield.

The former West Ham and Manchester United midfielder star had been told by Liverpool manager Gerard Houllier that there was no future for him at Anfield, leaving Middlesbrough manager Bryan Robson, a former United teammate of Ince's, clear to make his move.

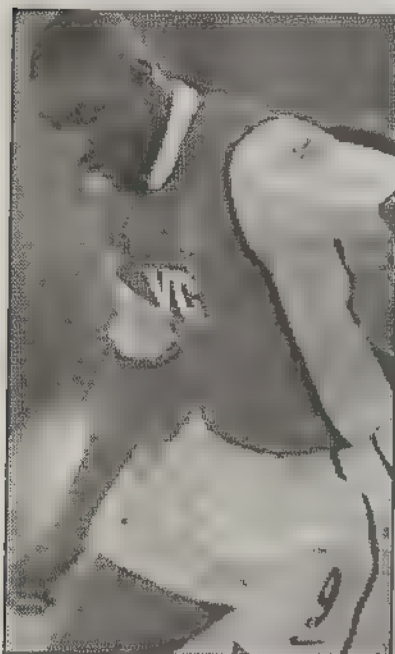
Middlesbrough will also have the services of Christian Ziege whose £4million-plus move is designed to save his international career.

The German World Cup defender, out of the first-team picture at AC Milan, said: "I hope I will get games at Middlesbrough."

"I want my place in the national team and this is a good opportunity."

"If I'm not playing regularly, I will not be part of the German squad."

Boro assistant boss Viv Anderson said: "There's no problem with the deal and we're just tying up some loose ends."



difficult for him to come back now.

"I am angry about the whole situation surrounding this. I will say more when the story is over."

It is an order which the 20-year-old French star is almost certain to ignore, having already stated he will never play for Arsenal again.

But the Gunners are determined to emerge as the winners from the year's most truculent transfer saga.

Arsenal's managing director Ken Friar confirmed that after Anelka insisted "for his own reasons" on walking out on an £18,000-a-week four-year contract at Highbury that separate transfer negotiations were held with two Italian clubs and that "it was believed agreement could have been reached."

But an official statement from Highbury added that: "It would appear that personal terms were not concluded and that a transfer to either club was unable to proceed."

Lazio claim that "crazy" money being asked by Arsenal has been the biggest hitch in the transfer.

It is believed that Lazio were originally only prepared to go to £18million for Anelka and then upped the offer by £4million provided the player was prepared to absorb the difference in his own pay packet to be attached to a five-



ment in New York.

But Spurs, who played a friendly against Wolves at Molineux on Saturday, have declared an interest and are pondering the possibility of a

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

TEAM PREVIEW

ARSENAL

Position last season: 2nd.
Manager: Arsene Wenger
Key Player: Dennis Bergkamp. When he is firing, the Gunners are, too, and so it is vital he starts the season refreshed and on form unlike last term when early wobbles ultimately cost Arsenal dear. Once more the Dutchman, now 30, won't be available for European travels because of his fear of flying. So they will need him to reproduce the stunning League form which earned him that double Footballer of the Year tag in 1998.

Major Gains: Oleg Luzhny, Dynamo Kiev, £1.8m; Silvinho, Corinthians, £4m; Stefan Malz, Munich 1860, £650,000; Moritz Veltz, Schalke 04, Undisclosed.
Major Losses: Fabian Caballero, Atletico Tembetary, Undisclosed; Kaba Diawara, Marseille, £2.5m; Remi Garde, Retired; Steve Bould, Sunderland, £500,000; Jason Crowe, Portsmouth, £750,000; Michael Black, Tranmere, Free.
Chances: Anything below the top two is considered failure now for Arsene Wenger's men but despite the anticipated loss of Nicolas Anelka, which might even turn out a blessing in disguise for their much-respected powers of team spirit, they should again be well-placed to take advantage of Manchester United's heavy fixtures-load provided their famously ageing defence holds up again.

ASTON VILLA

Position last season: 6th
Manager: John Gregory
Key Player: Dion Dublin. It was no coincidence that when Dublin became handicapped by a hernia injury, Villa's title challenge began to falter in 1998-99. The former Coventry striker hit the back of the net almost for fun after his £5.5million move across the Midlands but was a shadow of his normal self in the final third of the campaign. Now a fit-again Dublin can re-ignite the kind of challenge which saw Villa head the table for five months before the wheels well and truly came off.
Major Gains: David James, Liverpool, £1.8m; George Boateng, Coventry, £4.5m; Naguan Garayeb, Hapoel Haifa, £1m.
Major Losses: Mark Bosnich, Manchester United, Free; Alan Lee, Burnley, £150,000; Stan Collymore, Fulham, Loan.
Chances: It is hard to imagine Villa making a sustained challenge for the ultimate prize of the Premiership title but a top three Champions League place could be within their capabilities. Manager John Gregory was bitterly disappointed at last season's fade-out which was so

dramatic that not even a UEFA Cup spot could be salvaged as injuries took their toll. But the squad should be stronger despite the loss of Mark Bosnich with Steve Stone looking to make an impact after his first pre-season with Villa and Alan Thompson aiming to put an injury-hit first season behind



Dennis Bergkamp - key player for Arsenal

him.

BRADFORD

Manager: Paul Jewell
Key Player: Lee Mills. The club's first £1million player caused a sensation in Division One last season when he claimed 25 goals for the Bantams. Promotion was the highlight of the 29-year-old's career after plying his trade at Wolves, Derby and Port Vale, but only time will tell how he copes with the demands of the Premiership.
Major Gains: David Wetherall, Leeds, £1.4m; Lee Sharpe, Leeds, £200,000; Gunnar Halle, Leeds, £200,000; Matt Clarke, Sheffield Wednesday, Free; Andy Myers, Chelsea, £800,000.
Major Losses: Paul Bolland, Notts County, Free.
Chances: Bradford will do all they can to avoid following Barnsley and Charlton's path straight back to the First Division but the odds are heavily stacked against them and simply surviving will be a success.

CHELSEA

Position last season: 3rd
Manager: Gianluca Vialli
Key Player: Chris Sutton. Chelsea's main problem last season was finishing off teams and while they only lost three Premiership games, they drew too often to win the title. The £10million signing of Sutton finally promises to provide the

key to that cutting edge alongside the sublime talent of Gianfranco Zola, with Tore Andre Flo offering strength in depth for Europe.

Major Gains: Chris Sutton, Blackburn, £10million; Didier Deschamps, Juventus, £3m; Mario Melchiot, Ajax, Free; Jes Høgh, Fenerbahce, £300,000.

Carlo Cudicini, Castel Di Sangro, Loan.

Major Losses: Michael Duberry, Leeds, £4.5m; Eddie Newton, Birmingham, Free; Brian Laudrup, Ajax, Undisclosed; Dimitri Kharine, Celtic, Free; Andy Myers, Bradford, £800,000.

Chances: Chelsea have yet again strengthened their squad this summer, with Sutton and Didier Deschamps the pick of the buys, and will be helped by boss Gianluca Vialli concentrating solely on managing. The Blues will be hard to beat, more clinical in attack and while a run in the extended Champions' League could hinder them in the Premiership, expect another top three finish with the runners-up prize beckoning.

COVENTRY

Position last season: 15th
Manager: Gordon Strachan
Key Player: John Aloisi. The former Portsmouth player did enough in the final third of the season after his move from Fratton Park to suggest he can fill the void left by Dion Dublin's move to Aston Villa. If he can forge an effective partnership with Noel Whelan and Darren Huckerby, then the Coventry faithful could find themselves with a new hero.
Major Gains: Mustapha Hadji, Deportivo La Coruna, £4m; Raffaele Nuzzo, Inter Milan,

Loan; Antonino Caruso, Inter Milan, Loan; Stefano Giocchini, Venezia, £2m; Youseff Chippo, Porto, £1.2m; Morten Hyldgaard, Ikast, £200,000.

Major Losses: George Boateng, Aston Villa, £4.5m; Philippe Clement, Bruges, £770,000; Free; Willie Boland, Cardiff, Free; Barry Prenderville, Ayr, Undisclosed.
Chances: Last season was a major disappointment for the Sky Blues and their manager Gordon Strachan after the relative prosperity of a mid-table placing in 1997-98. There is no doubting the talent in the Coventry squad but they again flirted with relegation for much of the campaign and supporters could be facing another anxious period to see if the new Millennium will unfold with Premiership football still on the menu.

DERBY

Position last season: 8th
Manager: Jim Smith
Key Player: Francesco Baiano is the player who makes Derby tick. His return to form immediately after Christmas helped the Rams produce their best football of last season and he is their most influential man going forward by some distance.

Major Gains: Seth Johnson, Crewe, £2.5m; Andy Oakes, Hull, £460,000; Esteban Fuentes, Colon De Santa Fe, £2m.

Major Losses: Paulo Wanchope, West Ham, £3.5m; Brian Lauders, Colchester, Free.

Chances: Derby, like at least a dozen other Premiership sides, are realistic enough to concede they have next to no chance of winning the title. But after top 10 finishes in each of the last two seasons, a place in Europe will again be their target this time around.

EVERTON

Position last season: 14th
Manager: Walter Smith
Key Player: Don Hutchison. The one-time wild boy matured magnificently last season into a respected, reliable professional. He'll captain the side this term, and has justified that honour with his responsibility and leadership. Breaking into the Scotland side has helped his own confidence and self-esteem, and he'll be the driving force in midfield.
Major Gains: Kevin Campbell, Trabzonspor, £3m; Richard Gough, San Jose Clash, Free.
Major Losses: Olivier Dacourt, Lens, £6.5m; Ibrahima Bakayoko, Marseille, £3.8m; Marco Materazzi, Perugia, £3m; Adam Eaton, Preston, Nominal.
Chances: Everton would view a

mid-table finish as a triumph of open top bus ride proportions. Around £20m in debt and having to sell expensive foreigners, the side will battle hard but doesn't have the class and quality to get more than a few places above the relegation battle. With an ageing defence, they will rely on the continued progress of a crop of fine youngsters for incentive. Michael Bail and Francis Jeffers will be the key. But if they keep improving, how long before a massive offer forces Everton to sell?

LEEDS

Position last season: 4th
Manager: David O'Leary
Key Player: Jimmy Floyd Hasselbank. The Dutch international has become a major player in Leeds' resurgence under David O'Leary. He has pace, vision and, most notably, the ability to find the net.

Major Gains: Danny Mills, Charlton, £4m; Michael Duberry, Chelsea, £4.5m; Eirik Bakke, Sojndal, £1m.

Major Losses: David Wetherall, Bradford, £1.4m; Lee Sharpe, Bradford, £200,000; Gunnar Halle, Bradford, £200,000; Nuno Santos, Released.

Chances: Leeds' young side created a wonderful impression in the Premiership last season, where they eventually finished fourth, and qualified for the UEFA Cup for the second successive season. But it was the manner of the Elland Road play which has delighted the fans with Lee Bowyer, Harry Kewell, Alan Smith and Jonathon Woodgate all excelling for the club. The acquisition of Danny Mills from Charlton and Michael Duberry from Chelsea is a further sign that Leeds will provide a genuine challenge.

LEICESTER

Position last season: 10th
Manager: Martin O'Neill
Key Player: Emile Heskey. This is a big season for Heskey, who is forever being linked with the Premiership big guns, if he wants to take that next step forward and challenge for a regular England spot. His second half of last season was wrecked by a persistent back problem but in the dying embers of the season he looked sharp again.

Major Gains: None.
Major Losses: Pontus Kaamark, AIK Stockholm, £1m.
Chances: Leicester finished a respectable 10th last season, with an impressive string of results towards the end of the term. They will do well to match that feat but O'Neill is a canny manager with the knack of bringing the best out of the players at his disposal.

LIVERPOOL

Position last season: 7th

Manager: Gerard Houllier

Key Player: Sander Westerveld. New goalkeeper from Vitesse Arnhem has been Houllier's most important summer signing. He has class, is newly-capped for Holland and will replace David James.

Major Gains: Sander Westerveld, Vitesse Arnhem, £4m; Sami Hyypia, Willem II, £3m; Stephane Henchoz, Blackburn, £3.5m; Titi Camara, Marseille, £2.5m; Erik Meijer, Bayer Leverkusen, Free; Vladimir Smicer, Lens, £3.75m

Major Losses: Steve McManaman, Real Madrid, Free; Rob Jones, Released; David James, Aston Villa, £1.8m; Jean-Michel Ferri, Sochaux, £1.5m

Chances: After last season's horror finish, Gerard Houllier will have to do much better. European qualification is the very least that will be expected at Anfield.

best young managers in Robson. While the recent trend has seen teams who are promoted go straight back down to the First Division, Boro showed last term that they are here to stay. Robson must continue to get the best out of his older players - particularly Paul Gascoigne - if they are to finish any higher than mid-table this season. As for the younger ones, last season's top-flight experience should make them better prepared for the campaign ahead.

NEWCASTLE

Position last season: 13th

Manager: Ruud Gullit

Key Player: Alan Shearer. England's captain must be getting tired of hearing the critics writing him off. The only way for him to respond is by doing what he does best - scoring goals. You only have to hear him talk to know that his hunger is still there - and that means the rest of the Premiership had better watch out.

Major Gains: Franck Dumas, Monaco, £500,000; Marcelino Elena, Real Mallorca, £5m; Alain Goma, Paris St Germain, £4.75m; Kieron Dyer, Ipswich, £6m

Major Losses: George Georgiadis, PAOK Salonika, £1m; Peter Keen, Carlisle, Nominal

Chances: Ruud Gullit has splashed a lot of cash this summer - and there's even more where that came from. But money

cannot buy the title, and the Dutchman still has a lot of work to do in moulding his team if the Geordies are going to mount a serious challenge. Perhaps they can go one better than in the past two seasons though, and win the FA Cup.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

Position last season: 12th

Manager: Danny Wilson

Key Player: Benito Carbone. Provided the diminutive transfer-listed Italian can sort out his protracted contract negotiations with Wednesday, Carbone will be the key to success or failure this season. The immensely talented striker is blessed with some wonderful skills which have turned games for the Owls. Put simply, when Carbone plays, Wednesday play.

Major Gains: Gilles de Bilde, PSV Eindhoven, £3m; Gerald Sibon, Ajax, £2m; Phil O'Donnell, Celtic, Free; Simon Donnelly, Celtic, Free

Major Losses: Dejan Stefanovic, Perugia, Free; Matt Clarke, Bradford, Free; Guy Whittingham, Portsmouth, Free

Chances: A top-half finish for Danny Wilson in his second season at the club would be a victory for a team which has flirted with relegation in recent years. Wilson has been financially disadvantaged since he took over at Hillsborough and whilst nobody doubts his ability to motivate players, there is a lack of real quality and depth in the squad. Without financial clout, Wednesday may be in for another season of disappointment and struggle.

SOUTHAMPTON

Position last season: 17th

Manager: Dave Jones

Key Player: James Beattie. Having proved a bargain after moving to The Dell, in the deal which took Kevin Davies to Blackburn, 21-year-old Beattie showed immense promise in his first full season last year. Having scored vital goals against Leicester and Wimbledon in the final weeks of the season to help keep the Saints up, he is expected to come of age this term.

Major Gains: Bruno Leal, Sporting Lisbon, Free; Dean Richards, Wolves, Free; Marco Almeida, Sporting Lisbon, year's loan

Major Losses: Steve Basham, Preston, Tribunal; Stephen Jenkins, Brentford, Free; Michael Stensgaard, FC Copenhagen, Free; Ken Monkou, Out of contract

Chances: Dave Jones has made shrewd signings in Hassan Kachoul and Marian Pahars, while Beattie should blossom. Matt Le Tissier is still there and given their superb home record, Saints fans can reasonably expect the luxury of mid-table security this time around.

SUNDERLAND

Position last season: 1st in Division One

Manager: Peter Reid

Key Player: Kevin Phillips. The young striker has set the First Division alight in the past two seasons - now he must do the same again on the big stage as Sunderland try their hand in the Premiership. At least Phillips is not lacking in confidence, and he will enjoy the challenge.

Major Gains: Carsten Fredgaard, Lyngby, £2m; Steve Bould, Arsenal, £500,000; Thomas Helmer, Bayern Munich, Free

Major Losses: Lee Clark, Fulham, £3m; Andy Melville, Fulham, Free

Chances: Peter Reid's one task is to avoid dropping straight back to the First Division - but what a task that is. The odds are stacked against them but the ease with which Sunderland won promotion last term will give them the hope that they can follow the lead of neighbours Middlesbrough and survive in the top flight.

TOTTENHAM

Position last season: 11th

Manager: George Graham

Key Player: David Ginola. If Tottenham are to add to their silverware they will need another sparkling season from the man who was voted PFA and FWA Footballer of the Year last term.

Major Gains: Chris Perry, Wimbledon, £4m; Willem Korsten, Vitesse Arnhem, £1.5m

Major Losses: Rory Allen, Portsmouth, £1m; Andy Sinton, Wolves, Free; Clive Wilson, Released; Roger Nilsen, Casino Graz, Free

Chances: Tottenham are still some way short of the Big Three but a good run in the UEFA Cup will compensate. Graham has tightened up the defence and they can expect to finish much higher than 11th this time.

WATFORD

Position last season: 5th in Division One (play-off winners)

Manager: Graham Taylor

Key Player: Richard Johnson. He is an Australian midfield dynamo, in the mould of Roy Keane, who has flourished under manager Graham Taylor's influence and could find the battlegrounds of the Premiership an inspiring environment. His rocket shots will also bring the occasional spectacular goal.

Major Gains: Des Lyttle, Nottingham Forest, Free; Dominic Foley, Wolves,

Free; Mark Williams, Chesterfield, Free

Major Outs: Darren Bazeley, Wolves, free; Tony Daley, Walsall, Free; Ronny Rosenthal, Released

Chances: None to slim - and slim has just left town. Don't expect a repeat of the Eighties fairy-tale when, in Taylor's first spell, the Hornets stormed the top-flight after charging almost straight through from the old fourth division to finish runners-up to Liverpool, reach an FA Cup final and qualify for Europe. The Premiership is too sophisticated now to suffer the surprise element but back Watford to beat the drop if they get a decent start.

WEST HAM

Position last season: 5th

Manager: Harry Redknapp

Key Player: Paolo Di Canio. If the temperamental Italian channels his passion for the game into his football, then the Hammers will have one helluva hitman on their hands. The fans already love him and his shooting boots - which come in all colours - can help fire West Ham up the table again.

Major Gains: Paulo Wanchope, Derby, £3.5m

Major Losses: Eyal Berkovic, Celtic, £5.75m; Scott Mean, Bournemouth, Free; Julian Dicks, Retired

Chances: The fact that Alex Ferguson led Manchester United to a historic treble last season was just cause to name him manager of the year. But it took away the focus of Harry Redknapp's achievement of leading the Hammers to fifth in the League, a terrific feat given his limited resources. Don't bet against shrewd Eastender Harry wheeling and dealing his team towards another impressive season.

WIMBLEDON

Position last season: 16th

Manager: Egil Olsen

Key Player: Robbie Earle. His influence as captain in a period of huge transition under new boss Egil Olsen will be vital if at least some of the old Dons' fighting spirit is to survive. Earle's quiet yet firm leadership, midfield graft and a flair for opportunist goals are fundamental requirements to maintain some continuity.

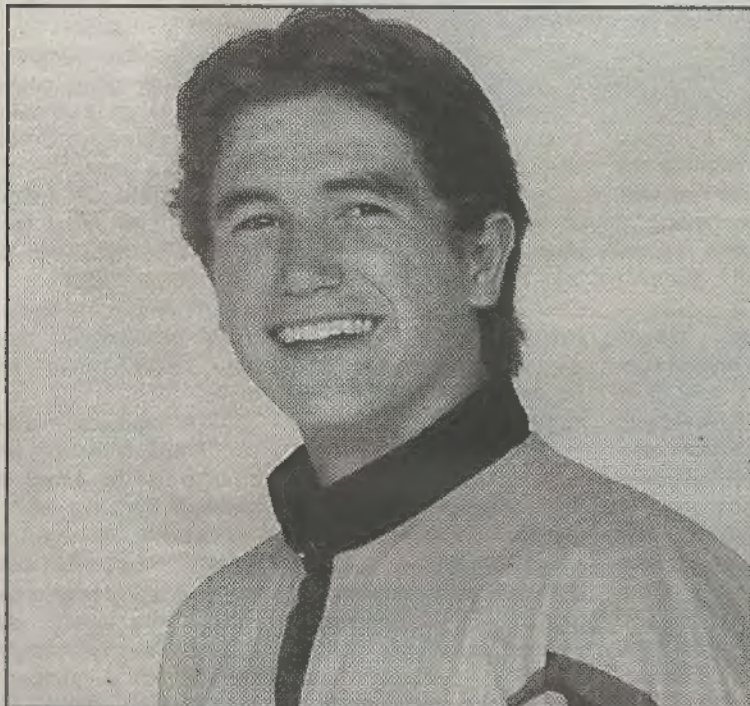
Major Gains: Tore Pedersen, Eintracht Frankfurt, Free; Kelvin Davis, Luton, £650,000; Waleed Badeer, Hapoel Petah Tikva, £1m (subject to work permit); Chris Wilmott, Luton, £650,000

Major Losses: Chris Perry, Tottenham, £4m; Mark Kennedy, Manchester City, £1m; Peter Fear, Oxford, Free

Chances: No hope at all. We've all said it before and been made to look foolish, but this finally looks like the season Wimbledon slide out of the top rank - and the consequences could be dire. Removing Kinnear's inspirational influence and tactical know-how could prove a major bungle by the club's relatively new Norwegian owners and they may have to pay for it by opening a Nationwide account.

BETTING ODDS:

MANCHESTER UNITED	11-10
ARSENAL	2-1
CHELSEA	5-1
LEEDS	11-1
LIVERPOOL	20-1
TOTTENHAM	25-1
NEWCASTLE	33-1
ASTON VILLA	50-1
WEST HAM	66-1
MIDDLESBROUGH	80-1
EVERTON	100-1
SUNDERLAND	100-1
DERBY	125-1
SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY	125-1
LEICESTER CITY	150-1
COVENTRY CITY	200-1
WIMBLEDON	200-1
SOUTHAMPTON	200-1
WATFORD	500-1
BRADFORD	500-1



Harry Kewell - expected to be the spearhead for Leeds this season

Liverpool fans will be hoping that the rush of transfer activity ends virtually a decade of under-achievement. But title talk appears fanciful.

MANCHESTER UNITED

Position last season: 1st

Manager: Alex Ferguson

Key Player: Roy Keane. There is no one in the game who ranks higher than United's midfield general. He is better than ever, following his cruciate ligament injury, and he was the driving force behind last season's Treble success.

Major Gains: Mark Bosnich, Aston Villa, Free

Major Losses: Peter Schmeichel, Sporting Lisbon, Free

Chances: Are any other teams better? United have yet to lose a game in 1999 and they have proved themselves the dominant force not just in England, but in Europe. Few would bet against the favourites retaining their Premiership crown.

MIDDLESBROUGH

Position last season: 9th

Manager: Bryan Robson

Key Player: Hamilton Ricard. The Colombian striker proved last season that he has a genuine goal-scoring talent, helping Boro to mid-table safety with his goals. Another season in the Premiership should see him go from strength to strength - which is only good news for Boro.

Major Gains: Christian Ziege, Paul Ince

Major Losses: Vladimir Kinder, work permit expired; Clayton Blackmore, Released

Chances: Boro have one of the game's

SCOTS TO CHANGE STRUCTURE OF PREMIER LEAGUE AGAIN

Scottish Premier League chief executive Roger Mitchell has unveiled a radical new structure for the 2000/1 season offering top flight clubs the lowest chance of being relegated anywhere in Europe.

The SPL will increase to 12 clubs next term, with a late-season split after 33 games seeing two groups of six play out for the title, European and relegation placings.

Ahead of the new format this coming campaign will see a possible end of season play-off between the bottom club in the SPL and the second and third position teams in Division One.

But the prospect of this ever taking place is unlikely as it needs the top three sides in Division One - the champions would be promoted automatically - meeting strict stadia criteria by a March 31 deadline.

To date only four of the 10 present clubs have 10,000 all-seater grounds with last season's second and third-placed teams Falkirk and Ayr both well short of the SPL requirements.

If one or more of the top three fail to meet the criteria this term, the two best-placed clubs whose facilities make the grade will be promoted regardless of their league finish and no SPL club relegated.

The decision to introduce a split in 2000/1 follows a working group's consultations with leagues in Austria, Switzerland and Croatia, and has been unanimously endorsed by the SPL's member clubs.

Mitchell believes the fact only one in 12 clubs will be demoted should significantly ease the tension evident in a 10 team set-up, and predicts a brighter style of play as a direct result.

He said today: "We're very confident the new structure will encourage exciting, attacking football as well as increasing the numbers of young Scottish players."

"The fact that teams will only have a one in 12 chance of being relegated, the lowest in Europe, should lead to even more entertaining games and a reduction in the fear factor."

"There will be a major incentive towards attacking football as every club will be playing to secure a place in the top six and the last five games in both groups will be exciting as they will be against direct competitors."

"The over-riding priority of the SPL and the new format is to raise the quality of Scottish football while retaining a significant appeal for supporters throughout the new season."

"Our primary objective is to raise the standard at the top level and we are confi-

dent this new league structure will be welcomed by fans, players and the public as an excellent foundation for the game in Scotland."

All the clubs will retain their existing points totals going into the final five matches and pre-season seeding should ensure the majority have a balanced year of 19 home and 19 away matches.

SPL director of football administration and finance, Iain Blair, said: "In the event of a club performing better than expected it will play 20 away fixtures but this is something all 10 teams have approved."

"We've spent a great deal of time and effort developing the new system and believe we have found a format which will provide a fair and exciting programme of matches before and after the split."

Rangers boss Dick Advocaat was quick to repeat the argument he put forward

last week which favoured an 18-team competition where all clubs played each other twice.

"They play 38 matches in Spain so it can be done but I don't think it is good for Scottish football," said the Dutchman, speaking from Finland where his side played FC Haka as they bid for a place in the third qualifying round of the Champions Cup.

"The authorities must start to think of ideas to benefit Scottish teams and help them do well in Europe."

"Twenty years ago Scotland had a much higher UEFA ranking than Holland, yet now the reverse is true."

"There is no doubt in my mind that the Scottish champions, whoever they are, are good enough to play in the Champions League."

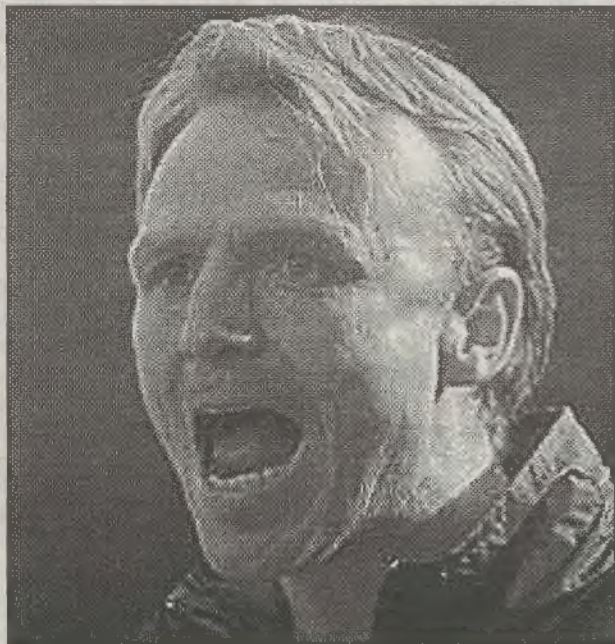
"But, like Celtic last season, we find ourselves in the qualifying round, whereas the fourth-placed Italian side is seeded to go straight through."

"Every club in the Premier League must look to Europe because in the near future the competition will just get more intense."

"I am really concerned how many more problems the extra games will give us and I'm not sure what the intention of the play-offs are."

Meanwhile the 1999-2000 Scottish season kicked off last weekend with the two perennial winners, Rangers and Celtic primed to fight it out again this year.

Celtic, in particular, has been strengthened considerably this year with its prize recruit, Eyal Berkovic spearheading their challenge. With Australian Mark Viduka now settled and under the new management team of Kenny Dalglish and his former Liverpool colleague John Barnes, who is experiencing his first first team coaching position, Celtic are primed to challenge Rangers for the title.



Alex McLeish leading his Hibs team into the top League

HUMBLE LOVELL OK WITH SECOND BEST

Hibernian midfielder man Stuart Lovell has a refreshingly honest reason for wanting to play in the Premier League - he's not good enough to make it in the top flight in England.

The former Reading man took a chance and moved North last season after overcoming a serious knee injury which almost wrecked his career.

But signing a one-year deal with the Easter Road outfit proved to be the perfect career decision.

Lovell was a pivotal force in Hibs' stroll to the First Division title last season and is now hoping to help stabilise the capital club on their Premier League return.

Pre-season results have offered encouragement, a 1-0 victory over Middlesbrough sent Hibs to their opening day confrontation with Motherwell in optimistic mood.

And for Lovell, who signed a new two-year contract this summer, it is the perfect opportunity to sample the major league football he has always dreamed off.

"If players are being honest, they want to challenge at the highest level they possibly can," he said.

"My mum is from Aberdeen and I have spent quite a lot of time north of the border."

"Unlike most English people, I don't have a narrow view of Scottish football being all about two clubs."

"I do not see myself as a Premiership player in England but I would like to think I can play at the highest level up here."

"Only time will tell but so far the signs are quite good."

Lovell had been looking for a minimum of a three-year contract to be placed in front of him during the close season but the cautious Hibs board would not play ball.

It left Lovell in the tricky position of deciding whether to accept a deal below his expectations or seek pastures new.

After a bit of careful consideration, he opted to stay.

He said: "I spoke to Des Bremner at the Professional Footballers' Association in England and he asked me how much I enjoyed living in Edinburgh."

"I couldn't think of a better place and the fact that the club is so friendly just sealed it."

"Sometimes people don't appreciate how important it is to have a squad who get on with each other."

"We certainly have that at Hibs and once I had gone away and thought about it, I wanted to stay for as long as they would have me."

Lovell's first experience of the Premier League also means he will have a chance to sample the five-week winter shut down, which has been hailed a success by most Scottish observers.

For a man whose body has suffered the ravages of a professional sporting career, Lovell is acutely aware of the welcome relief of not having to play in the harsh conditions of January.

"I am used to playing the whole way through and it takes its toll on your body and mind," he said.

"Punters pay their money and want to see decent football."

"But the number of games we play, coupled with the weather conditions, mean the chances of it happening are limited."

"Players are exhausted and they need to be fresh to produce their best on a regular basis."

"There seem to be so many competitions nowadays, you don't have time to think."

"At least the mid-season break gives us all a chance to go away and recharge our batteries."

Lovell, though, will have his hands full in retaining his starting position with Hibs' manager, Alex McLeish, strengthening his squad with a number of Continental acquisitions.

The capture of Fabrice Henry, Dirk Lehman and Matthias Jack has made it a lot harder to get into the starting eleven.

Lovell has already faced those facts during the pre-season games in which he has been used mainly off the bench.

BOOT THAT TWISTS AND TURNS TO LOWER INJURY

A design graduate has created a football boot which he says allows players to twist and turn like never before.

And Iain Sabberton, 23, claims his new boot will make the game's top players less prone to cruciate knee ligament injuries.

Already big clubs and bootmakers are taking an interest in the young designer's idea.

Knee injuries can take months to recover from. England captain Alan Shearer and Paul Gascoigne have both suffered cruciate ligament damaged which kept them out of the game for many months.

The problem has been the rigid sole of football boots, which have remained virtually untouched despite advances in technology.

If a player catches his feet in the turf, the inflexibility of the boot can rupture the ligament.

Iain, from Lymm in Cheshire, who graduated from Northumbria University with a BA honours degree in design for industry, believes he has found the answer.

He previously invented a fell running shoe with pistons that cushion the feet. But he says his latest idea can benefit players in other sports as well as football.

"I have used softer density rubber on the sole to enable the studs to move when they bite into the turf," he said.

"It eases pressure enough on the knee to prevent the ligament being damaged."

The idea, which formed the basis of a university project, has already received interest from top manufacturers including adidas and Puma.

Iain has now won Stg5,000 (\$A12,400) from the Audi Foundation to develop his design further.

RANGERS START SEASON OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT

Rangers 2 Kilmarnock 1

Michel Moles, having demolished FC Haka in Ranger's midweek championship qualifier, failed to make the starting line-up after gaining a dead leg at the end of that encounter. His place was taken by Gabriel Amato, who has yet to make an impact with the fans, as much as with the Rangers goal scoring tally.

A fine move initiated by midfield playmaker Barry Ferguson demonstrated the best part of the youngster's game. He tricked his marker leaving adequate space for a measured pass to Arthur Numan, who sent Jorg Albertz down the wing but the cross was too deep for Wallace.

It seemed like all the was positive about Rangers play was instigated by



Tony Vidmar ... off the bench

Ferguson. He combined with Dariusz Adamczuk and Wallace to thread through a perfect pass to the striker, but the cross was blocked by Chris Innes.

Rangers are champions, but infallible they are definitely not. As the last part of the match ensued, Rangers started to loose concentration and even the previously inspired Ferguson gave the ball away far too easily, providing fuel for Kilmarnock to continue their attack. Five minutes before the break Rangers regained their composure with some delightful play, which was matched by a spectacular finish. Giovanni Van Bronckhorst sent a 60-yard pass high over the top which fell perfectly at the feet of Rod Wallace. Although followed all the way by his marker, he took one touch before striking his second beyond Colin Meldrum who, by this time, was well out of this goal.

Tempers were frayed somewhat in the first half and this did not change after the restart.

Kilmarnock soon capitalised on the lack of concentration by the Rangers defence. Gary Hay provided a deep cross from the left which defender Craig Moore opted to leave. Unfortunately it fell directly at the feet of Mitchell who

turned and drove the ball into the corner of the goal.

Rangers, however, were determined to have the last word and despite a fightback by the visitors, man-of-the-match Claudio Reyna made the difference between the teams. He started the move down the right poulling off an acute 1-2 with Albert before reaching the byline to collect the 2nd pass. They simply floated the ball beyond Meldrum.

Mercifully for the champions Kilmarnock had nothing left to give and the Rangers supporters gave a big sigh of relief as the final whistle blew.

Rangers:

Klos, Moore (Porrini 63), Amoroso (Vidmar 81), Numan, Ferguson, B, Van Bronckhorst, Wallace, Albertz, Reyna, Amato (Johansson 71), Adamczuk

Kilmarnock:

Meldrum, MacPherson, Jeffrey, McGowne, Reilly, Holt, Mitchell, Dindeleux, Roberts (Vareille 59), Innes, Hay (Mahood 89).

Scorers:

Rangers: Wallace 39, Reyna 68
Kilmarnock: Mitchell 65

Crowd: 48,074

VIDUKA STARS IN CELTIC SEASON OPENING VICTORY

Aberdeen 0 Celtic 5

John Barnes' first steps in management turned into a procession of goals as Celtic marched to a comprehensive 5-0 success over a woeful Aberdeen at Pittodrie.

Ahead of his opening competitive fixture, Barnes had admitted to a nervous tension, but it proved a relaxing affair from the moment Henrik Larsson put Celtic ahead after only four minutes.

Mark Viduka struck twice before the interval to leave Aberdeen beaten by half-time as Celtic turned on the class to vindicate Barnes' controversial 4-2-2-2 formation.

Larsson claimed his second and Celtic's fourth with another spot kick after 52 minutes before a late Mark Burchill goal sealed a rout to launch the Parkhead club's league campaign in style.

Depleted Aberdeen introduced £300,000 new keeper David Preece whose initial duty was to pick the ball from the back of his net as Celtic scored via their first attack.

Lubomir Moravcik's cross from the left picked out last season's top scorer Larsson whose firm downward header left Preece powerless as the Swede

outjumped Derek Whyte.

Larsson glanced a neat header narrowly wide after 20 minutes then conspired to strike the bar from point blank range in Celtic's next attack after Morten Wieghorst touched on a Berkovic corner.

After 35 minutes, the visitors doubled their advantage when Moravcik created space on the left before delivering a precise cross for Viduka.

It was the cue for the Dons to wilt as seven minutes later Wieghorst found Vidar Riseth whose low ball into the area set up Viduka for a simple tap-in to make it 3-0.

Aberdeen brought on Jim Hamilton for Young at half-time hoping for a change of fortune and looked to have been offered a potential way back when Tibily brought down Winters in the box.

But Gould reacted smartly to push away Jess' goalward bound penalty.

After 52 minutes, Russell Anderson pulled down Viduka at the other end and Celtic had a penalty which brought back memories of the two spot kicks missed here in a 3-2 loss last term.

But Larsson stepped up and converted without fuss to place Celtic an emphatic 4-0 ahead, a lead they should have extended



Mark Viduka

when Moravcik fired over an empty net 11 minutes later.

For Barnes his first night at the office had gone like a dream - the display capped by Burchill, on as a late substitute for the injured Viduka, slotting under Preece.

Aberdeen:

Preece, Smith, Anderson, Whyte, Dow, Young (Hamilton 46), Bernard (McAllister 70), Pepper, Wyness (Kiriakov 61), Winters, Jess,

Celtic:

Leighton, Mackie, Gould, Tibily, Boyd, Mjallby, Riseth, Lambert, Wieghorst, Berkovic, Moravcik, Larsson, Viduka (Burchill 61),

Scorers:

Celtic: Larsson (4, pen 53) Viduka (35, 42), Burchill (90)
Crowd: 16,080

HIBS FOILED IN LAST MINUTE

Hibs 2 Motherwell 2

Teenage substitute Steve Nicholas denied Hibs a winning return to the Premier League as he struck deep into injury-time to score with a deflected shot which ruined the home side's big day.

Until Nicholas' strike, Alex McLeish's men were heading for victory thanks to two opportunist strikes from new German signing Dirk Lehmann. The striker, signed from Fulham, scored his first with a low shot on the stroke of half-time and after another Motherwell substitute, Pat Nevin, headed a 64th minute equaliser, Lehmann headed his second with just ten minutes remaining.

Hibs boss McLeish was left frustrated that his side had only a point to show for their efforts.

"I thought we had it won but a match lasts 90 minutes and Motherwell showed us that," he said.

"We have to learn how to win matches when we are in a position like that." Hibs would surely have won but for Andy Gorum who produced a string of second-half saves

to keep them at bay.

Hibs dominated the early play but it was Motherwell who had the first real chance on 11 minutes. Mathias Jack failed to cut out a cross from Don Goodman but when the ball broke to Derek Adams, the former Ross County player's shot was wayward.

Indeed, it was the visitors who had an opening after 24 minutes when Lee McCulloch played the ball back for Derek Townsley, but from 16 yards, the midfielder skied his effort.

Hibs took the lead a minute from the break when Stuart Lovell set-up German striker Lehmann and he beat 'keeper Gorum at his near post.

Then Gorum produced his best save of the match moments later when Lovell fed Lehmann but his goalbound effort was stopped by an instinctive one-handed save.

The visitors equalised out of the blue after 64 minutes. A deep cross from Townsley was headed back across goal by McCulloch for Nevin to score with rare header.

Hibs went ahead again ten minutes from

time. Substitute Justin Skinner curled in an inch-perfect free-kick for Lehmann to bullet a header past Gorum.

McLeish's men then sat on their lead and invited Motherwell to come back at them. They paid the penalty when Nicholas brought the ball down in the penalty area and cut in from the right before beating Ole Gottskalksson with a low shot which took a wicked deflection.

Hibernian:

Gottskalksson, Renwick, Lovering, Dennis, Jack, Sauzee, Lovell, Henry (Hartley 54), Latapy, Crawford (Skinner 71), Lehmann,

Motherwell:

Gorum, Craigan (Doesburg 68), Thomas, Teale, McGowan, Valakari, Brannan, Townsley (Nicholas 81), Adams (Nevin 58), McCulloch, Goodman.

Scorers:

Hibs: Lehmann 45, 80
Motherwell: Nevin 63, Nicholas 90

Crowd: 13,058

HEARTS AND UNITED OPEN ACCOUNT

St Johnston 1 Hearts 4

Hearts achieved in 90 minutes what they failed to do in 10 months last season - beat St Johnston.

Indeed, their positive, inventive display at McDiarmid Park was full value for such a convincing victory over last season's third-top team. Gary McSwegan, Thomas Fogel, a Darren Dods own goal and Colin Cameron had the Tynecastle men comfortably in front with 11 minutes left, before John McQuillan grabbed Saints' late equaliser.

St Johnstone:

Main, McQuillan, Weir, Dods, Bolland, O'Halloran (O'Neil 59), Kane (Griffin 80), McBride, Dasovic, Grant (McMahon 66), Simao.

Hearts:

Rousset, James, Pressley, Murray, G, Fogel, Jackson (Make 82), Severin, Cameron, Fulton, Adam (Wales 82), McSwegan (Carricondo Perez 82),

Scorers:

St Johnstone: McQuillan 83
Hearts: McSwegan 29, Fogel 66, Dods (og) 78,

Cameron 79.

Crowd: 6,709

Dundee Utd 2 Dundee 1

Dundee United supporters are not exactly well known for their patience and the club's lack of activity in the transfer market over the summer must have infuriated a large percentage of them.

Ironically, one of the new faces has immediately become something of a cult figure at Tannadice by starting his United career with a late winning goal against neighbours, Dundee.

Dundee boss, Jocky Scott, kept faith with the same players who climbed to fifth spot last season, finishing ahead of their city rivals for the first time in two decades.

United took the lead in the 14th minute. There was nothing fancy about the goal as Swede Magnus Skoldmark controlled a corner from Jamie Paterson and lashed the ball home, right-footed off the underside of the crossbar.

The visitors deservedly equalised in the 53rd minute when much-travelled striker Willie Falconer turned neatly in the box and

cracked a ferocious right-foot drive past Alan Combe from 12 yards.

Many might have expected Jocky Scott's men to go out and win the game, but instead, United were the team to find the extra gear. Sturrock gambled by bringing on sub Ferraz to replace Steven Thompson and within a few minutes, the striker brought the very best out of Douglas with a dipping left-foot shot. The new signing eventually found a way past Douglas to seal the points for United.

Dundee United:

Combe, Pascual, Hannah, De Vos, Jonsson, Skoldmark, Dods, Paterson, J, Thompson (Ferraz 68), Worrell, Davidson.

Dundee:

Douglas, Smith, Maddison, Miller, Tweed, Boyack, Rae, Grady, Falconer, McSkimming, Sharpe (Yates 87)

Scorers:

Dundee United: Skoldmark 13, Ferraz 85
Dundee: Falconer 53

Crowd: 11,693

TEAM GIPPSLAND

SEE PAGE 3

